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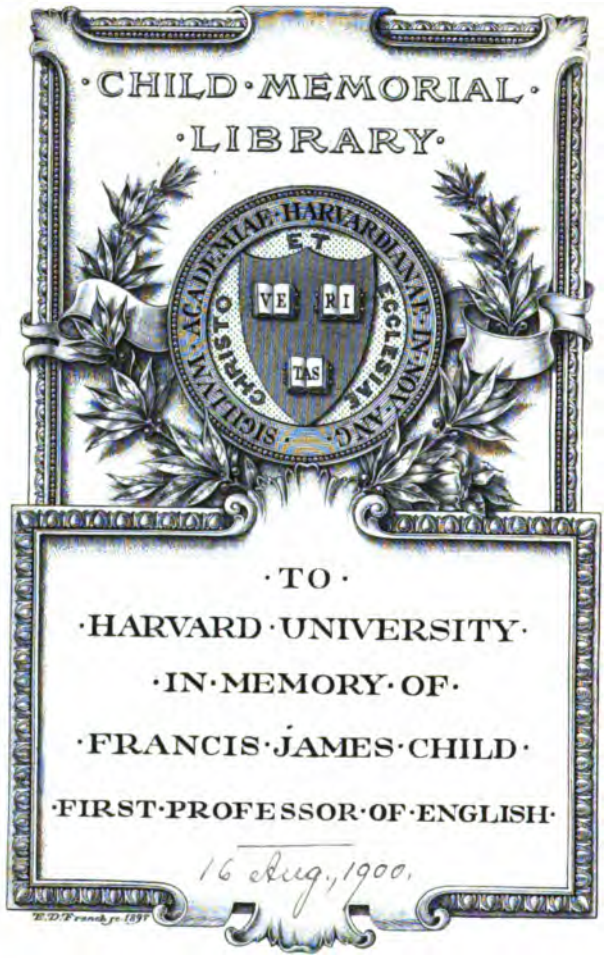

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MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

CHAPTER I.

MR. EDWARDS'S BIRTH, PARENTAGE, EDUCATION AND ENTRANCE INTO THE MINISTRY.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS was one of those men of whom it is not easy to speak with justice without seeming, at least, to border on the marvellous, and to incur the guilt of adulation. The Christian Biographer labors under a difficulty, in describing the characters of extraordinary men, which the writers of other lives are but too generally allowed to forget; for he is bound so to represent actions and motives, as to remind his readers, that the uncommon excellencies of a character flow entirely from the bounty of heaven, for the wisest and best purposes, and are not the result of natural vigor and acumen. Otherwise, instead of placing these excellencies in a view advantageous for imitation, or describing a character attainable, as to its most valuable traits, only by gracious aids, there would be danger of setting up an idol, more precious indeed than gold, but still an idol, whereby the mind would be led astray from the one great object of the Christian life, JESUS CHRIST, whose fulness *filleth all in all.* While we have a just view of *him*, it is a privilege to hear of his wonderful works in and by his honored servants; and to be enabled to imitate them is a great augmentation of the privilege. If *their* graces, exemplified in a variety of circumstances, in a manner force us to a throne of grace, and thereby prove the means of quickening *ours;* then do we make a right use of their history, and follow them who through faith and patience inherit the promises

Mr. Jonathan Edwards was born on the 5th of October, 1703, at Windsor, in the then Province of Connecticut, North America. His father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards, was minister of that place almost sixty years, and resided there from November, 1694, till January, 1758, when he died in the 89th year of his age, not two months before this his only son Jonathan. He was very universally beloved and esteemed, as an upright, pious, exemplary man: a faithful and very useful minister of the gospel. A few more particulars of this excellent man will be acceptable. He was born at Hartford, in Connecticut, May 14, 1669, received the honors of the college at Cambridge, in New England, by having the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts given him the same day, July 4th, 1694, one in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon. On November 6th, 1694, he married Esther Stoddard, daughter of the Rev. and celebrated Soloman Stoddard, of Northampton, in the 23d year of her age. They lived together in the married state above sixty-three years. Mrs. Edwards, our author's mother, was born June 2d, 1672, and lived to about ninety years of age (some years after her son), a remarkable in-

stance of the small decay of mental powers at so advanced an age. This venerable couple had eleven children; one son, the subject of these Memoirs, and ten daughters, four of whom were older, and six younger than himself.*

Mr. Edwards entered Yale College when about twelve years of age, and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Sept. 1720, a little before he was seventeen. While at college, his character was marked with sobriety and improvement in learning. In the second year of his collegiate course he read Locke on the Human Understanding with much delight. His uncommon genius, by which he was naturally formed for close thought and deep penetration, now began to discover and exert itself. From his own account, he was inexpressibly entertained and pleased with that book when he read it at college; more so than the most greedy miser, when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some newly discovered treasure. Though he made good proficiency in all the arts and sciences, and had an uncommon taste for Natural Philosophy (which he cultivated to the end of his life), yet Moral Philosophy, including divinity, was his favorite subject, in which he made great progress in early life.

He lived at college nearly two years after he took his first degree, preparing for the work of the ministry. After which, having passed the usual trials, he was licensed to preach the gospel as a candidate. In consequence of an application from a number of ministers in New England, who were intrusted to act in behalf of the English Presbyterians in New-York, he went to that city the beginning of August, 1722, and preached there with great acceptance about eight months. But on account of the

* We shall here subjoin a sketch of Mr. Edwards's more remote ancestors, as it may gratify some readers. Jonathan Edwards's grandfather was Richard Edwards, who married Elizabeth Tuttle, daughter of William Tuttle, of New Haven, in Connecticut, and Elizabeth his wife, who came from Northamptonshire, in Old England. By this connexion he had seven children, of whom the eldest was Timothy, our author's father. His second marriage was to Mrs. Talcot, by whom he had six children. The father of Richard was William Edwards, Jonathan's great-grandfather, who came from England young and unmarried. The person he married, whose Christian name was Agnes, and who had left England for America, had two brothers in England, one of them Mayor of Exeter, and the other of Barnstable. The father of William, Richard Edwards, our author's great-great-grandfather, was minister of the gospel in London, in the reign of queen Elizabeth; and his wife, Ann Edwards, was employed in making some part of the royal attire. After the death of Mr. Edwards, she married Mr. James Cole, who with her son William accompanied her to America, and all died at Hartford in Connecticut.

President Edwards's grandfather on the mother's side, Rev. Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, New England, married Mrs. Mather, the relict of the Rev. Mr. Mather, his predecessor, who was the first minister at Northampton. Her maiden name was Ester Warham, daughter, and the youngest child of the Rev. John Warham, minister at Windsor, in Connecticut, and who, before he left England, had been minister at Exeter. This lady had three children by Mr. Mather, viz., Eunice, Warham, and Eliakim; and twelve children by Mr. Stoddard, six sons and six daughters. Three of the sons died in infancy, and three lived to adult years, viz., Anthony, John, and Israel; the last of whom died a prisoner in France. Anthony was minister of the gospel at Woodbury, in Connecticut; he was in the ministry about sixty years, and died September 6, 1760, in the 82d year of his age. John lived at Northampton, and often, especially in his younger years, served the town as their representative, at the General Court at Boston; and was long head of the county of Hampshire, as chief colonel, and chief judge of the court of common pleas. He moreover served in the province of Massachusetts Bay, as one of his Majesty's council. He distinguished himself as an able politician, a wise counsellor, an upright and skilful judge; possessed in an eminent degree the spirit of government, and ever proved a great and steady friend to the interest of religion. He was a great friend and admirer of our Mr. Edwards, and to the time of his death, greatly strengthened his hands in the work of the ministry. A more particular account of the life and character of this truly great man may be seen in the sermon which Mr. Edwards preached and published on the occasion of his death. The father of Mr. Solomon Stoddard, and Mr. Edwards's great-grandfather, on the mother's side, was Anthony Stoddard, Esq., of Boston, a zealous congregational man. He had five wives, the first of whom was Mary Downing, sister to Sir George Downing, whose other sister married Governor Bradstreet. Solomon was the first child of this first marriage. From these particulars it appears, that Mr. Edwards's ancestors were from the west of England, who, upon their emigration, allied themselves to some of the most respectable families in America.

smallness of that society, and some special difficulties that attended it, he did not think there was a rational prospect of answering the good end proposed, by his settling there as their minister. He therefore left them the next spring, and retired to his father's house, where he spent the summer in close study. He was earnestly solicited by the people to return again to New-York; but his former views were not altered, and therefore, however disposed to gratify them, he could not comply with their wishes.

In Sept. 1723, he received his degree of Master of Arts. About this time several congregations invited him to become their minister; but being chosen tutor of Yale College, he chose to continue in that retirement, and attended the business of tuition there above two years. During his stay there, he was applied to by the people of Northampton, who had some powerful motives to offer, in favor of his exercising his ministry there; and especially that his grandfather Stoddard, by reason of his great age, stood in need of assistance. He therefore resigned his tutorship in Sept. 1726, and accepted their invitation, and was ordained as colleague with his grandfather, Feb. 15, 1727, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and continued at Northampton twenty-three years and four months.

CHAPTER II.

EXTRACTS FROM HIS PRIVATE WRITINGS.

BETWEEN the time of his going to New-York and his settlement at Northampton, Mr. Edwards formed a number of resolutions, which are still preserved. The particular time and special occasion of making many of these resolutions, he has noted in a diary which he then kept; where we also find many other observations and rules relative to his own exercises and conduct. As these private writings may be justly considered the basis of his conduct, or the plan according to which his whole life was governed, it may be proper here to give the reader some idea of them by the following extracts.

SECTION I.

His Resolutions.

Mr. Edwards was too well acquainted with human weakness and frailty, where the intention is most sincere, to enter on any resolutions rashly. He therefore looked to God for aid, who alone can afford success in the use of any means. This he places at the head of all his other important rules, that his dependence was on grace, while he frequently recurred to a serious perusal of them:—"Being sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God's help, I do humbly entreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake." He then adds:

"REMEMBER TO READ OVER THESE RESOLUTIONS ONCE A WEEK."*

1. Resolved, that *I will do whatsoever* I think to be most to God's glory and my own good, profit and pleasure, ON THE WHOLE; without any

*The Resolutions, as contained in the original manuscript, were seventy in number; a part only is here transcribed, as a specimen of the whole. The figures prefixed to them are those by which they were numbered in that manuscript; and they are here retained for the sake of the

consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence; to do whatever I think to be my *duty*, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general—whatever *difficulties* I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavoring to find some *new contrivance* to promote the forementioned things.

4. Resolved, *never to* DO, BE, *or* SUFFER, any thing in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of *time;* but improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.*

7. Resolved, never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

9. Resolved, to think much, on all occasions, of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.

11. Resolved, when I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder.

13. Resolved, to be endeavoring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

14. Resolved, never to do any thing out of revenge.

15. Resolved, never to suffer the least motion of anger to irrational beings.

17. Resolved, that I will so live as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

18. Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of the gospel and another world.

20. Resolved, to maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.

21. Resolved, never to do any thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.

24. Resolved, whenever I do any evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then both carefully endeavor to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.

28. Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

30. Resolved, to strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

32. Resolved, to be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that Prov. xx. 6 (*A faithful man who can find?*) may not be partly fulfilled in me.

references made to some of them in the Diary, as the reader will find in the subsequent part of these Memoirs. It may be proper to add, that we should regard the *spirit* of these Resolutions, and of the following extracts from the Diary, without a minute attention to the critical nicety of his language. In fact, as these extracts were penned at a very early period of life, his style was not formed; and his chief concern was to deal plainly with himself, in the presence of God, and to record for his own private inspection what he thought might be of most use to him in future.

* This is the full and exact import of the Latin motto, "*Dum vivimus, vivamus;*" which was the motto of Dr. Doddridge's family arms, and which he paraphrased with so much beauty:

"Live, while you live, the *Epicure* would say,
And seize the pleasures of the present day.
Live while you live, the sacred *preacher* cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies.
Lord, in my view let both united be;
I live in *pleasure* when I live to *thee*"

33. Resolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining, and establishing peace, when it can be done without an overbalancing detriment in other respects.

34. Resolved, never to speak in narrations any thing but the pure and simple verity.

36. Resolved, never to speak evil of any person, except some particular good call for it.

37. Resolved, to inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself; also at the end of every week, month, and year.

38. Resolved, never to speak any thing that is ridiculous, or matter of laughter, on the Lord's day.

39. Resolved, never to do any thing that I so much question the lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no: except I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

41. Resolved, to ask myself at the end of every day, week, month, and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better.

42. Resolved, frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism; which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have solemnly ratified this twelfth day of January, 1723.

43. Resolved, never to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.

46. Resolved, never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved, to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our family.

47. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good, and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, easy, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere temper; and to do at all times what such a temper would lead me to. Examine strictly every week, whether I have done so.

48. Resolved, constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of.

50. Resolved, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best and most prudent, when I come into the future world.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age.

54. Whenever I hear any thing spoken in conversation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, Resolved to endeavor to imitate it.

55. Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and hell torments.

56. Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. Resolved, when I fear misfortunes and adversities, to examine

whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as Providence orders it, I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty, and my sin.

62. Resolved, never to do any thing but duty; and then, according to Eph. vi. 6—8, do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to man; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

65. Resolved, to exercise myself much in this all my life long, viz., with the greatest openness to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him; all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance; according to Dr. Manton's 27th sermon on the 119th Psalm.

67. Resolved, after afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them; what good I *have* got, and what I *might* have got by them."

SECTION II.

Extracts from his Diary.

Though Mr. Edwards wrote his Diary for his own private use, exclusively, it is not apprehended that the following extracts are unfairly exposed to public view. Whatever is calculated to do good, and is perfectly consistent with an author's real reputation, may be published with honor, whatever his design might be while writing. Besides, what Mr. Edwards wished to have effectually concealed from every eye but his own, he wrote in a particular short-hand. After having written pretty much in that character, he adds this remark in long-hand: "Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23, *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*"

Saturday, Dec. 22, 1722. This day, revived by God's Holy Spirit. Affected with a sense of the excellency of holiness. Felt more exercise of love to Christ than usual. Have also felt sensible repentance for sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This night, made the 37th Resolution.

Sabbath night, Dec. 23. Made the 38th Resolution.

Monday, Dec. 24. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Jesus Christ and his kingdom.

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1723. Dull. I find by experience, that let me make resolutions, and do what I will, it is all nothing, and to no purpose at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God: for if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow; but should languish, and miserably fade away. There is no dependence upon myself. It is to no purpose to resolve, except we depend on the grace of God; for if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next.

Sabbath, Jan. 6, at night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceasing, as long as in this world.

Tuesday, Jan. 8, in the morning. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual repentance for sin therefrom.

Wednesday, Jan. 9, at night. Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think I have a great deal more of holiness than I really have. I find, now and

then, that abominable corruption, which is directly contrary to what I read respecting eminent Christians. How deceitful is my heart! I take up a strong resolution, but how soon does it weaken!

Thursday, Jan. 10, about noon. Reviving. It is a great dishonor to Christ, in whom I hope I have an interest, to be uneasy at my worldly state and condition; when I see the prosperity of others, and that all things go easy with them; when the world is smooth to them, and they are happy in many respects and very prosperous, or are advanced to much honor, &c., to envy them, or be the least uneasy at it; or even to wish for the same prosperity, and that it would ever be so with me. Wherefore concluded, always to rejoice in every one's prosperity, and to expect for myself no happiness of that nature as long as I live; but reckon upon afflictions, and betake myself entirely to another happiness.

I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping. I think it would be advantageous every morning to consider my business and tempations; and what sins I shall be exposed to that day: and to make a resolution how to improve the day, and to avoid those sins. And so at the beginning of every week, month and year. I never knew before what was meant by not setting our hearts upon these things. It is, not to care about them, depend upon them, afflict ourselves much with fears of losing them, or please ourselves with expectation of obtaining them, or hope of their continuance. At night made the 41st Resolution.

Saturday, Jan. 12, in the morning. I have this day solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed when I was received into the communion of the church. I have been before God; and have given myself, all that I am and have, to God, so that I am not in any respect my own: I can claim no right in myself, no right in this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: no right to this tongue, these hands, nor feet; no right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell or taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained any thing as my own. I have been to God this morning, and told him that I gave myself *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; so that for the future, I will challenge or claim no right in myself, in any respect. I have expressly promised him, and do now promise Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. And did believe in Jesus Christ, and receive him as a Prince and a Saviour; and would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, how hazardous and difficult soever the profession and practice of it may be. That I did receive the blessed Spirit as my teacher, sanctifier and only comforter; and cherish all his motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort, and assist me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a self-dedication; and to receive me now as entirely his own, and deal with me in all respects as such; whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth I am not to act in any respect as my own. I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to any thing that is not to

the glory of God, or do not make the glorifying of him my whole and entire business; if I murmur in the least at afflictions; if I grieve at the prosperity of others; if I am any way uncharitable; if I am angry because of injuries; if I revenge my own cause; if I do any thing purely to please myself, or avoid any thing for the sake of my ease, or omit any thing because it is great self-denial; if I trust to myself; if I take any of the praise of any good that I do, or rather God does by me; or if I am any way proud. This day made the 42d and 43d Resolutions.

Monday, Jan. 14. The dedication I made of myself to my God, on Saturday last, has been exceeding useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the Scripture while reading the 8th chapter to the Romans, than ever in my life before. Great instances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of sin, hard blows that make him stagger and reel; we thereby get firm ground and footing against him. While we live without great instances of mortification and self-denial, the old man keeps whereabouts he was; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small blows. After the greatest mortifications, I always find the greatest comfort. Supposing there was never but one complete Christian, in all respects, of a right stamp, having Christianity shining in its true lustre, at a time in the world; resolved, to act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, that should be in my time.

Tuesday, Jan. 15. It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday, that I should always retain the same resolutions to the same height, but alas, how soon do I decay! O how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing am I! What a poor, inconsistent, miserable wretch, without the assistance of God's Spirit! While I stand, I am ready to think I stand in my own strength; and am ready to triumph over my enemies, as if it were I myself that caused them to flee; when alas! I am but a poor infant, upheld by Jesus Christ; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to smile to see my enemies flee, when he drives them before me; and so I laugh as though I myself did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights himself against my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, how weak do I find myself! O, let it teach me to depend less on myself, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my ability to Jesus Christ. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?

Saturday, Feb. 15. I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel requires. At night. I have been negligent for the month past in these three things: I have not been watchful enough over my appetite in eating and drinking; in rising too late; and in not applying myself enough to the duty of secret prayer.

Sabbath day, Feb. 17, near sunset. Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God, for my whole portion; and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever prosperity, upon any account, I see others enjoy, and I am denied.

Saturday, March 2. O, how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleasures of humility are really the most refined, inward and exquisite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm that lifts up itself with pride! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived, poor worm am I, when pride works!

Wednesday, March 6, near sunset. Felt the doctrines of election, free grace, and of our not being able to do any thing without the grace of God; and that holiness is entirely, throughout, the work of God's Spirit, with more pleasure than before.

Monday morning, April 1. I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the follies and infirmities of others.

Saturday night, April 6. This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me, that I should never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay! I know, O Lord, that without thy help, I shall fall innumerable times, notwithstanding all my resolutions, how often soever repeated.

Saturday night, April 13. I could pray more heartily this night, for the forgiveness of my enemies, than ever before.

Wednesday, May 1, forenoon. Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New-York. I have always, in every different state of life I have hitherto been in, thought the troubles and difficulties of that state to be greater than those of any other that I proposed to be in, and when I have altered with assurance of mending myself, I have still thought the same; yea, that the difficulties of that state, are greater than those of that I left last; Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my thoughts, affections, desires and expectations, entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state; where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love without alloy; where there are continually the dearest exgressions of this love; where there is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never come to an end, but will last to eternity. Remember, after journeys, removes, overturnings, and alterations in the state of my life, to consider, whether therein I have managed the best way possible, respecting my soul; and before such alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

Thursday, May 2. I think it a very good way to examine dreams every morning when I awake; what are the nature, circumstances, principles and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them, to discern what are my chief inclinations, &c.

Saturday night, May 4. Although I have in some measure subdued a disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination which is not agreeable to Christian sweetness of temper and conversation: too dogmatical, too much of egotism; a disposition to be telling of my own dislike and scorn; and freedom from those things that are innocent, or the common infirmities of man; and many such like things. O that God would help me to discern all the flaws and defects of my temper and conversation, and help me in the difficult work of amending them; and that he would fill me so full of Christianity, that the foundation of all these disagreeable irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary beauties may follow.

Sabbath day, May 5, in the morning. This day made the 47th Resolution.

Sabbath day, May 12. I think I feel glad from the hope that my eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy joys, arising from the manifestation of God's love, and the exercise of holiness and a burning love to him.

Saturday night, May 18. I now plainly perceive what great obligations I am under to love and honor my parents. I have great reason to believe, that their counsel and education have been of great use to me; notwithstanding, at the time, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good reason to hope that their prayers for me have been in many things very powerful and prevalent; that God has in many things taken me under his care and guidance, provision and direction, in answer to their prayers. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

Wednesday, May 22, in the morning. *Memorandum.* To take special care of these following things: evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking simple verity, joining in prayer, slightness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

Saturday, May 25, in the morning. As I was this morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I was now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my state, whether it be good or bad; and that I had taken more pains to see, and narrowly search into this matter. Wherefore, *Mem.* For the future most nicely and diligently to look into our old divines concerning conversion. Made the 48th Resolution.

Friday, June 1, afternoon. I have abundant cause, O merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly to bless and praise thee, that thou hast heard me in my earnest request, and hast so answered my prayer for mercy to keep from decay and sinking. O, graciously, of thy mere goodness, continue to pity my misery by reason of my sinfulness. O, my dear Redeemer, I commit myself, together with my prayer and thanksgiving, into thine hand.

Monday, July 1. Again confirmed by experience of the happy effects of strict temperance, with respect both to body and mind. Resolved for the future to observe rather more of meekness, moderation, and temper in disputes.

Thursday, July 18, near sunset. Resolved to endeavor to make sure of that sign the Apostle James gives of a perfect man, James iii. 2, *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

Monday, July 22. I see there is danger of my being drawn into transgression by a fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch against it.

Tuesday, July 23. When I find those groanings which cannot be uttered, that the apostle speaks of; and those soul breakings for the longing it hath, which the Psalmist speaks of, Ps. cxix. 20, let me humor and promote them to the utmost of my power, and be not weary of earnestly endeavoring to vent my desires. I desire to count it all joy when I have occasion of great self-denial, because then I have a glorious opportunity of giving deadly wounds to the body of sin, and greatly confirming and establishing the new nature; to seek to mortify sin, and increase in holiness; these are the best opportunities (according to January 14) to improve afflictions of all kinds, as blessed opportunities of forcibly bearing on in my Christian course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, to damp the vigor of my mind, and to make me lifeless; also as opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, habitually, according to the 57th Resolution; and of rending my heart off from the world,

and setting it upon heaven alone; to repent of, and bewail my sin, and abhor myself; and as a blessed opportunity to exercise patience, to trust in God, and divert my mind from the affliction, by fixing myself in religious exercises. Also, let me comfort myself, that it is the very nature of afflictions to make the heart better; and if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present?

Friday, July 26. To be particularly careful to keep up an inviolable trust and reliance, ease, and entire rest in God, in all conditions, according to the 57th Resolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous.

Monday, July 29. When I am concerned how I shall perform any thing to public acceptance, to be very careful that I do what is duty and prudence in the matter.

Wednesday, July 31. Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of others' faults. Never to give credit to any thing said against others, except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave in any respect otherwise for it.

Wednesday, August 7. To esteem it an advantage that the duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are sometimes to be gone through in the way of duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by labor is abundantly more precious; as a woman loves her child the better for having brought it forth with travail. And even as to Christ Jesus himself in his mediatorial glory, (including his victory and triumph, and the kingdom which he hath obtained,) how much more glorious, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out by such agonies!

Friday, August 9. One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in time of vacation or leisure is, that when I light on a profitable thought, I can fix my mind in order to follow it, as far as possible to advantage.

Sabbath day, after meeting, *August* 11. Resolved always to do that which I shall wish I had done, when I see others do it. As for instance, sometimes I argue with myself, that such an act of good-nature, kindness, forbearance or forgiveness, &c., is not my duty, because it will have such and such consequences; yet, when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it; and I see that none of these feared inconveniences do follow.

Tuesday, August 13. I find it would be very much to my advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures. When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can see upon what foundation I stand.

Thursday, August 29. The objection my corruptions make against doing whatever my hand finds to do with my might is, that it is a constant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

Monday, Sept. 2. There is much folly, when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, in entering into a vehement or long debate upon it.

Monday, Sept. 23. I observe that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries; because these are beside a way of thinking they have been so long used to. Resolved, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking.

Thursday, Oct. 18. To follow the example of Mr. B——, who, though he meets with great difficulties, yet undertakes them with a smiling countenance, as though he thought them but little; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

Thursday, Nov. 26. It is a most evil and pernicious practice in meditating on our afflictions, to ruminate on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckon up the evil circumstances thereof, dwelling long on the dark side; it doubles and trebles the affliction. And so, when speaking of them to others as bad as we can, and use our eloquence to set forth our own troubles, we thus are all the while making new trouble, and feeding the old; whereas the contrary practice would starve our afflictions. If we dwelt on the light side of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that we possibly could when speaking of them, we should then think little of them ourselves; and the affliction would really, in a great measure, vanish away.

Thursday night, Dec. 12. If at any time I am forced to tell persons of that wherein I think they are sometimes to blame; for avoiding the important evil that would otherwise ensue, resolved not to tell it them in such a manner, that there should be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind.

Dec. 31, at night. Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry emotions of mind more or less, except the honor of God calls for it, in zeal for him, or to preserve myself from being trampled on.

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1724. Not to spend too much time in thinking even of important and necessary worldly business. To allow every thing its proportion of thought according to its urgency and importance.

Friday Jan. 10. [After short-hand notes] Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*

Monday, Feb. 3. Let every thing have the value now, that it will have on a sick-bed; and frequently in my pursuits of whatever kind, let this come into my mind: "How much shall I value this on my death-bed?"

Wednesday, Feb. 5. Have not in time past, in my prayers, insisted enough upon glorifying God in the world, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the good of men. Determined that this objection is without weight, viz., "That it is not likely that God will make great alterations in the whole world, and overturnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obscure person, seeing such things used to be done in answer to the united earnest prayers of the whole church; and if my prayers should have some influence, it would be but imperceptible and small."

Thursday, Feb. 6. More convinced than ever of the usefulness of religious conversation. I find by conversing on natural philosophy, I gain knowledge abundantly faster, and see the reasons of things much clearer, than in private study. Wherefore, resolved earnestly to seek at all times for religious conversation; and for those persons that I can with profit, delight, and freedom so converse with.

Sabbath day, Feb. 23. If I act according to my resolution, I shall desire riches no otherwise than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of Scripture, that to fallen man they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

Saturday, May 23. How it comes about I know not; but I have

remarked it hitherto, that at those times when I have read the Scriptures most, I have evermore been most lively, and in the best frame.

Saturday night, June 6. This has been a remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares and distraction of thought; being the week I came hither (to New Haven) in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and perpetual vexation of the world.

Tuesday, July 7. When I am giving the relation of a thing, let me abstain from altering, either in the matter or manner of speaking, so much, as that if every one afterward should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, Sept. 22. By a sparing diet, and eating what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly; and shall gain time, 1st, By lengthening my life: 2dly, Shall need less time for digestion after meals; 3dly, Shall be able to study closer without wrong to my health; 4thly, Shall need less time to sleep; 5thly, shall more seldom be troubled with the headache.

Sabbath day, Nov. 22. Considering that bystanders always espy some faults which we do not see, or at least are not so fully sensible of ourselves; for there are many secret workings of corruption which escape our sight, and others only are sensible of; resolved, therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me that appear any way blameworthy, unlovely, or unbecoming.

SECTION III.

Some Account of his Conversion, Experience, and Religious Exercises, written by himself.

The foregoing extracts were written by Mr. Edwards when about twenty years of age, as appears by the dates. The judicious reader, therefore, keeping this in mind, will make proper allowance for some things which may appear like the productions of a young Christian, both as to the matter, and the manner of expression. And indeed, the whole being taken together, these apparent blemishes have their important use. For hereby all appears more natural and genuine; while the strength of his resolution, the fervor of his mind, and a skill in discriminating divine things so seldom found even in old age, appear the more striking. A picture of human nature in its present state, though highly improved by grace, cannot be a true resemblance of the original, if it be drawn all light, and no shades. In this view we shall be forced to admire his conscientious strictness, his diligence and zeal, his deep experience in some particulars, and his accurate judgment respecting the most important parts of true religion, at so early an age. Here we have, not only the most convincing evidence of his sincerity in religion, and of his engaging in a life devoted to God in good earnest, so as to make religion his one great business; but also, through his great attention to this matter, how in many instances he acquired the judgment and experience of gray hairs.

Behold, reader, the beginning of a life so eminently holy and useful! Behold the views, the exercises, the resolutions of a man who became one of the greatest divines of his age; one who had the applause and ad-

miration of America, Britain, Holland, and Germany, for his piety, judgment, and great usefulness. Behold here an excitement to the young, to devote themselves to God with great sincerity, and enter on the work of strict religion without delay, and more especially, those who are looking forward towards the work of the ministry. Behold then, ye students in divinity, our future preachers and writers, the most immediate and direct, yea, the only way to answer the good ends which you profess to seek. "Go, ye, and do likewise."

It is to be lamented, that there is so much reason to think there are few instances of such early piety in our day. If the Protestant world abounded with young persons of this stamp; young men, preparing for the work of the ministry with such a temper, such exercises, and such resolutions, what a delightful prospect would this afford of the near approach of happier days than the church of God has ever yet seen! What pleasing hopes, that the great and merciful Head of the church was about to send forth laborers, faithful, successful laborers into his harvest; and bless his people with "pastors which shall feed them with knowledge and understanding!"

But if our youth neglect all proper improvement of the mind; are shy of seriousness and strict piety; choose to live at a distance from all appearance of it; and are given to carnal pleasures; what a gloomy prospect does this afford! If they who enter into the work of the ministry, from a gay, careless, and what may justly be called a vicious life, betake themselves to a little superficial study of divinity, and soon begin to preach; while all the external seriousness and zeal they put on, is only from wordly motives; they being without any inward, experimental acquaintance with divine things, and even so much as any taste for true divinity; no wonder if the people perish for lack of spiritual knowledge.

But, as the best comment on the foregoing Resolutions and Diary; and that the reader may have a more full and instructive view of Mr. Edwards's entrance on a religious life, and progress in it, as to the views and exercises of his mind; a brief account thereof is here inserted, which was found among his papers, in his own hand-writing; and which, it seems, was written near twenty years after, for his own private advantage.

"I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my school-mates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And

I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace

"But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely lost all those affections and delights and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy, in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet, it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practice many religious duties; but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me I sought after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

"From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But I never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's showing mercy to whom he will show mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so

"The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i. 17, *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen.* As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him forever! I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual or of a saving nature, in this

"From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words, Cant. ii. 1, used to be abundantly with me, *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys.* The words seemed to me sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness, that would carry me away, in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and rapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul that I know not how to express.

"Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

"After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in

every thing; in the sun, and moon, and stars; in the clouds and blue sky, in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the mean time, singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder storm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant forth my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

"I felt then great satisfaction, as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28, *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath.* I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceeding different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what I had then no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colors. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul-satisfying, and life-giving good there is in them.

"My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, until I went to preach at New-York, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there I felt them, very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity, appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete Christian; and conformed to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure, sweet, and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should *be* more holy, and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness,

and a holy life, with much more earnestness than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means, how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness, than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness, and conformity to Christ.

"The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love; and it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

"I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, 'I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes.' It appeared to me that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness—a *divine* beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

"Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gentle vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.

"While at New-York, I was sometimes much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then; and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

"On *January* 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself and all I had to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself in

any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

"I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favorable aspect on the interests of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly catched at it; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favorable to the interest of religion in the world.

"I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place, on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the holy Scriptures, of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

"I came away from New-York in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New-York to Wethersfield, by water, and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge; and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

"After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind, as when at New-York; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at New-York. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my Diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where the[se] persons

who appear so ovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises will never cease but will last to all eternity! I continued much in the same frame, in the general, as when at New-York, till I went to New Haven as tutor to the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to New Haven I sunk in religion; my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

"In September, 1725, I was taken ill at New Haven, and while endeavoring to go home to Windor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there in divine, pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the Psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning;* and when the light of day came in at the windows, it refreshed my soul from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory.

"I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honor them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But, some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart, than ever I had before.

"Since I came to this town,* I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections and the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on the account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in showing mercy to whom he would show mercy; and man's absolute dependence on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me, great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him

"I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would in a great measure spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delighful to me, Isa. xxxii. 2, *A man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest,* &c.

* Northampton.

"It has often appeared to me delightful, to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text Matth. xviii. 3, has often been sweet to me, *Except ye be converted and become as little children*, &c. I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into, and out of Christ; to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psal. cxv. 1, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.* And those words of Christ, Luke x. 21, *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worthy of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to show the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

"Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems at such times a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

"My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the Scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

"I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

"Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace

and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

"I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as the word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

"Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion.* It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind; of all that have been since the beginning of the world to this time; and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself; I thought their expressions seemed exceeding faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

"My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind and in my mouth, 'Infinite upon infinite —Infinite upon infinite!' When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and

* Our author does not say, that he *had* more wickedness, and badness of heart, since his conversion, than he had before; but that he had a greater *sense* thereof. Thus the blind man may *have* his garden *full* of noxious weeds, and yet not *see* or be *sensible* of them. But should the garden be in great part cleared of these, and furnished with many beautiful and salutary plants; and supposing the owner now to have the power of discriminating objects of sight; in this case, he would *have* less, but would *see*, and have a *sense* of more. To which may be added, that the better the organ, and clearer the light may be, the stronger will be the *sense* excited by sin or holiness.

the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet it seems to me, that my conviction of sin is exceeding small, and faint; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping for my sins, I thought I knew at the time that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

"I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be 'humbled in the dust;' that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, 'to lie infinitely low before God.' And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy and deceit, left in my heart.

"I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

"Though it seems to me, that, in some respects, I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet, of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, 'This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine;' and of Christ, 'This is my chosen Prophet.' It appeared sweet, beyond all expression to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night (*January*, 1739) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, 'How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!' I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done."

CHAPTER III.

HIS GENERAL DEPORTMENT, PARTICULARLY WHILE AT NORTHAMPTON.

In the first chapter of these Memoirs, we have seen that Mr. Edwards having taken his Master's degree, was very soon invited to be tutor of that college where he received his education, and which conferred upon him that degree; a clear proof, that the managers had a high opinion of his talents and qualifications, when only in the twenty-first year of his age. It must be owned, that this was an engagement of great consequence for so young a man; especially, considering that no small portion of his time had been devoted to ministerial occupations, and the requisite preparatory studies which relate exclusively to that important business. But the strength of his mind overcame difficulties, which to the generality of students appear insuperable. It must be allowed, indeed, that our author was not in the highest class of *learned* men; for his time, his means, and his duties, did not allow of such an attainment. We should recollect, however, what Mr. Locke somewhere very properly observes, that though men of much reading "are greatly *learned*, they may be but little *knowing*." In some situations and circumstances, he might have been a great linguist, a profound mathematician, a distinguished natural philosopher; but (without any designed reflection on those who excel in these, or any other branches of literature and science) he was far more happily employed, both for himself and others. In fact, he has given proofs of a mind so uncommonly vigorous and enlightened, that it is rather a matter of joy it was not engrossed by studies, which would have rendered him only the admiration of a few, but prevented him from producing those works which are of universal importance, and in which he appears as the instructor of all. He had, in short, the best and sublimest kind of knowledge, without being too much encumbered with what was but little compatible with his calling.

We have also seen that Mr. Edwards resigned his tutorship at Yale College, when he had been there, in that capacity, a little more than two years, in consequence of an invitation from Northampton, in Massachusetts, in order to assist the aged and venerable Mr. Stoddard. In the present chapter we propose to detail his general manner of life more particularly while at this place; which, in connection with the uncommon revival of religion there, of which he was the happy and honored instrument, is a very interesting period of his life.

He who enters into the true spirit of our author's writings, and especially of the extracts we have given from his private papers, cannot question that he made conscience of private devotion; but, as he made a secret of such exercises, nothing can be said of them but what his papers discover, and what may be fairly inferred from circumstances. It appears, by his Diary, that in his youth he determined to attend secret prayer more than twice a day, when circumstances would allow; and there is much evidence that he was frequent and punctual in that duty, often kept days of fasting and prayer, and set apart portions of time for devout meditations on spiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious exercises in retirement.

This constant, solemn converse with God in these exercises made his

face, as it were, to shine before others. His appearance, his countenance, words, and whole demeanor, though without any thing of affected grimace, or sour austerity, were attended with a seriousness, gravity, and solemnity, which were the genuine indication of a deep, abiding sense of divine things on his mind, and of living constantly in the fear of God.

Agreeably to his Resolutions, he was very careful and abstemious in eating and drinking; as doubtless it was necessary for so great a student, and a person of so delicate a make as he was, in order to be comfortable and useful. When he had, by careful observation, found what kind, and what quantity of diet best suited his constitution, and rendered him most fit to pursue his work, he was very strict and exact in complying with it. In this respect he *lived by rule;* and herein he constanly practised great self-denial; which he also did in his constant early rising, in order to redeem time for study. He accustomed himself to rise at four, or between four and five, in the morning.

Though he was of a tender constitution, yet few students are capable of more close application, or for more hours in a day, than he was. He commonly spent thirteen hours, every day, in his study. His most usual diversion, in summer, was riding on horseback and walking. He would commonly, unless diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner to some lonely grove, where he would dismount and walk a while. At which times he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that might be suggested, and which promised some light on any important subject. In the winter, he was wont almost daily to take an axe, and chop wood moderately, for the space of half an hour or more.

He had an uncommon thirst for knowledge, in the pursuit of which he spared no cost nor pains. He read all the books, especially books of divinity, that he could come at, from which he could hope to get any help, in his pursuit of knowledge. And in this, he did not confine himself to authors of any particular sect or denomination; but even took much pains to come at the books of the most noted writers who advanced a scheme of divinity most contrary to his own principles. But he studied the Bible more than all other books, and more than most other divines do. His uncommon acquaintance with the Bible appears in his sermons, and in most of his publications; and his great pains in studying it are manifest in his manuscript notes upon it; of which a more particular account will be given hereafter. He took his religious principles from the Bible, and not from any human system or body of divinity. Though his principles were *Calvinistic*, yet he called no man Father. He thought and judged for himself, and was truly very much of an original. Reading was not the only method he took to improve his mind; he was much given to writing, without which, probably no student can make improvements to the best advantage. Agreeably to Resolution 11th, he applied himself, with all his might, to find out the truth; he searched for understanding and knowledge as for silver, and digged for it as for hid treasures. Every thought, on any subject, which appeared to him worth pursuing and preserving, he pursued as far as he then could, with a pen in his hand. Thus he was all his days, like the busy bee, collecting from every opening flower, and storing up a stock of knowledge, which was indeed sweet to him, as the honey and the honey-comb. And, as he advanced in years and in knowledge, his pen was more and more employed, and his manuscripts grew much faster on his hands.

He was thought by some, who had but a slight acquaintance with him, to be stiff and unsociable; but this was owing to want of better acquaintance. He was not a man of many words indeed, and was somewhat reserved among strangers, and those on whose candor and friendship he did not know he could rely. And this was probably owing to two things. First, the strict guard he set over his tongue from his youth, which appears by his Resolutions, taking great care never to use it in any way that might prove mischievous to any; never to *sin with his tongue;* nor to employ it in idle, trivial, and impertinent talk, which generally makes up a great part of the conversation of those who are full of words in all companies. He was sensible that, in the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin; and therefore refrained his lips, and habituated himself to *think* before he *spoke*, and to propose some good end even in all his words; which led him to be, above others, conformable to an apostolic precept, *slow to speak.* Secondly, this was in part the effect of his bodily constitution. He possessed but a comparatively small stock of animal life; his spirits were low, and he had not strength of lungs to spare, that would be necessary in order to make him what might be called an affable, facetious gentleman. They who have a great flow of animal spirits, and so can speak with less expense than others, may doubtless lawfully practise free conversation in all companies for a lower end, e. g. to please, or to render themselves acceptable. But not so, he who has not such a stock; it becomes *him* to reserve what he has, for higher and more important service. Besides, the want of animal spirits lays a man under a *natural* inability of exercising that freedom of conversation, which those of more life naturally glide into; and the greatest degree of a social disposition, humility and benevolence, will not remove this obstacle.

He was not forward to enter into any dispute among strangers, and in companies where there might be persons of different sentiments; being sensible, that such disputes are generally unprofitable, and often sinful, and of bad consequence. He thought he could dispute to the best advantage with his pen; yet he was always free to give his sentiments on any subject proposed to him, and to remove any difficulties or objections offered by way of inquiry, as lying in the way of what he looked upon to be the truth. But how groundless the imputation of *stiff* and *unsociable* was, his known and tried friends best knew. They always found him easy of access, kind and condescending; and though not talkative, yet affable and free. Among such, whose candor and friendship he had experienced, he threw off reserve, and was quite patient of contradiction, while the utmost opposition was made to his sentiments, that could be by any plausible arguments or objections. And indeed, he was, on all occasions, quite sociable and free with all who had any special business with him.

In his family he practised that conscientious exactness which was conspicuous in all his ways. He maintained a great esteem and regard for his amiable and excellent consort. Much of the tender and kind was expressed in his conversation with her, and conduct towards her. He was wont frequently to converse freely with her on matters of religion; and he used commonly to pray with her in his study, at least once a day, unless something extraordinary prevented. The time for this, commonly, was just before going to bed, after prayers in the family. As he rose very early himself, he was wont to have his family up betimes in the morning; after which, before they entered on the business of the day, he

attended on family prayers: when a chapter in the Bible was read, commonly by candle light in the winter; upon which he asked his children questions according to their age and capacity; and took occasion to explain some passages in it, or enforce any duty recommended, &c., as he thought most proper.

He was thorough in the government of his children; and, as a consequence of this, they reverenced, esteemed and loved him. He took special care to begin his government of them in good time. When they first discovered any considerable degree of self-will and stubbornness, he would attend to them till he had thoroughly subdued them and brought them to submit. Such prudent discipline, exercised with the greatest calmness, being repeated once or twice, was generally sufficient for that child; and effectually established his parental authority, and produced a cheerful obedience ever after.

He kept a watchful eye over his children, that he might admonish them of the *first* wrong step, and direct them in the right way. He took opportunities to converse with them in his study, singly and closely, about their souls' concerns; and to give them warning, exhortation and direction, as he saw need. He took much pains to instruct them in the principles of religion; in which he made use of the *Assembly's Shorter Catechism;* not merely by taking care that they learned it by heart; but by leading them into an understanding of the doctrines therein taught, by asking them questions on each answer, and explaining it to them. His usual time to attend to this was on the evening before the Sabbath. And, as he believed that the Sabbath, or holy time, began at sunset the evening before the day, he ordered his family to finish all their secular business by that time, or before; when all were called together, a psalm was sung, and prayer made, as an introduction to the sanctification of the Sabbath. This care and exactness effectually prevented that intruding on holy time, by attending to secular business, which is too common even in families where the evening before the Sabbath is pretended to be observed.

He was a great enemy to young people's unseasonably associating together for vain amusements, which he regarded as a dangerous step towards corrupting and bringing them to ruin. And he thought the excuse many parents make for tolerating their children in it (viz., that it is the custom, and others' children practise it, which renders it difficult, and even impossible to restrain theirs) was insufficient and frivolous; and manifested a great degree of stupidity, on supposition the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their souls. And when his children grew up, he found no difficulty in restraining them from this pernicious practice; but they cheerfully complied with the will of their parents. He allowed none of his children to be from home after nine o'clock at night, when they went abroad to see their friends and companions; neither were they allowed to sit up much after that time, in his own house, when any came to make them a visit.

He had a strict and inviolable regard to justice in all his dealings with his neighbors, and was very careful to provide things honest in the sight of all men; so that scarcely a man had any dealings with him, that was not satisfied of his uprightness. He appeared to have a sacred regard to truth in his words, both in promises and narrations, agreeable to his Resolutions. This doubtless was one reason why he was not so full of words as many are. No man feared to rely on his veracity.

He was cautious in choosing his *intimate friends*, and therefore had not many that might properly be called such; but to them he showed himself friendly in a peculiar manner. He was indeed a faithful friend, and able above most others to keep a secret. To them he discovered himself more than to others, led them into his views and ends, and to his conduct, in particular instances: by which they had abundant evidence that he well understood human nature; and that his general reservedness, and many particular instances of his conduct, which a stranger might impute to ignorance of men, were really owing to his uncommon knowledge of mankind.

His conversation with his friends was always profitable. He was not wont to spend his time with them in scandal and backbiting, or in foolish jesting, idle chat, and telling stories: but his mouth was that of the just, which bringeth forth wisdom, and whose lips dispense knowledge. His tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, while he conversed about important, heavenly, divine things, which his heart was so full of, in such a natural and free manner, as to be most entertaining and instructive; so that none of his friends could enjoy his company without instruction and profit, unless it was by their own fault.

His great benevolence to mankind discovered itself, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he showed to the poor and distressed. He was much in recommending charity, both in his public discourses and private conversation. He often declared it to be his opinion, that professed Christians in these days are greatly deficient in this duty; and much more so than in most other parts of external Christianity. He often observed how much this is spoken of, recommended and encouraged in the Holy Scripture, especially in the New Testament. And it was his opinion that every particular church ought, by frequent and liberal contributions, to maintain a public stock, that might be ready for the poor and necessitous members of that church; and that the principal business of deacons is to take care of the poor in the faithful and judicious distribution and improvement of the church's temporals, lodged in their hands. And he did not content himself with recommending charity to others, but practised it much himself. He was forward to give on all public occasions of charity, though when it could properly be done, he always concealed the sum given And some instances of his giving more privately have accidentally come to the knowledge of others, in which his liberality appeared in a very extraordinary degree. One of the instances was this: upon his hearing that a poor obscure man, whom he never saw, or any of his kindred, was by an extraordinary bodily disorder brought to great straits he, unasked, gave a considerable sum to a friend to be delivered to the distressed person; having first required a promise of him, that he would let neither the person who was the object of his charity, nor any one else know by whom it was given. This may serve both as an instance of his extraordinary charity, and of his great care to conceal it.*

Mr. Edwards had the character of a *good preacher*, almost beyond any minister in America. His eminence as a preacher seems to have been owing to the following things:

First, The great pains he took in composing his sermons, especially in

* As both the giver, and the object of his charity are dead, and all the ends of the proposed secrecy are answered; it is thought not inconsistent with the above-mentioned promise, to make known the fact, as it is here related.

the first part of his life. As by his early rising and constant attention to study, he had more time than most others, so he spent more time in making his sermons. He wrote most of them in full, for near twenty years after he first began to preach; though he did not wholly confine himself to his paper in delivering them.

Secondly, His great acquaintance with divinity, and knowledge of the Bible. His extensive knowledge and great clearness of thought enabled him to handle every subject with great judgment and propriety, and to bring out of his treasure things new and old. Every subject he handled was instructive, plain, entertaining and profitable; which was much owing to his being master of the subject, and his great skill to treat it in a most natural, easy and profitable manner. None of his composures were dry speculations, unmeaning harangues, or words without ideas. When he dwelt on those truths which are much controverted and opposed by many, which was often the case, he would set them in such a natural and easy light, and every sentiment, from step to step, would drop from his lips, attended with such clear and striking evidence, both from Scripture and reason, as even to force the assent of every attentive hearer.

Thirdly, His excellency as a preacher was very much the effect of his great acquaintance with his own heart, his inward sense and high relish of divine truths, and experimental religion. This gave him a great insight into human nature: he knew much what was in man, both the saint and the sinner. This helped him to be skilful, to lay truth before the mind so as not only to convince the judgment, but also to touch the heart and conscience; and enabled him to speak out of the abundance of his heart what he knew, and testify what he had seen and felt. This gave him a taste and discernment, without which he could not have been able to fill his sermons, as he did, with such striking, affecting sentiments, all suited to move, and to rectify the heart of the hearer. His sermons were well arranged, not usually long, and commonly a large part taken up in the improvement; which was closely connected with the subject, and consisted in sentiments naturally flowing from it. But no description of his sermons will give the reader the idea of them which they had who sat under his preaching.

His appearance in the pulpit was graceful, and his delivery easy, natural, and very solemn. He had not a strong, loud voice; but appeared with such gravity, and solemnity, and spake with such distinctness, clearness and precision; his words were so full of ideas, set in such a plain and striking light, that few speakers have been so able to command the attention of an audience. His words often discovered a great degree of inward fervor, without much noise or gesture, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers.

Though he was wont to read what he delivered, he was far from thinking this the best way of preaching in general, and looked upon his using notes so much as he did, a defect and infirmity. And in the latter part of his life he was inclined to think it had been better, if he had never accustomed himself to use his notes at all. It appeared to him that preaching wholly without notes, agreeably to the custom in most Protestant countries, and what seems evidently to have been the manner of the apostles and primitive ministers of the gospel, was the most natural way: and had the greatest tendency, on the whole, to answer the end of preaching: and supposed that none who had talents equal to the work of the

ministry, was incapable of speaking *memoriter*, if he took suitable pains for this attainment from his youth. He would have the young preacher write his sermons, at least most of them, out at large; and instead of reading them to his hearers, take pains to commit them to memory. Which, though it would require a great deal of labor at first, yet would soon become easier by use, and help him to speak more correctly and freely, and be of great service to him all his days.*

His prayers were indeed *extempore*. He was the farthest from any appearance of a form, as to his words and manner of expression, of almost any man. He was quite singular and inimitable in this, by any who have not a spirit of real and undissembled devotion; yet he always expressed himself with decency and propriety. He appeared to have much of the grace and spirit of prayer; to pray with the spirit and with the understanding; and he performed this part of duty much to the acceptance and edification of those who joined with him. He was not wont, in ordinary cases, to be long in his prayers: an error which he observed was often hurtful to public and social prayer, as it tends rather to damp than promote true devotion.

He gave himself altogether to the work of the ministry, and entangled not himself with the affairs of this life. He left the particular oversight and direction of the temporal concerns of his family, almost entirely to Mrs. Edwards. He was less acquainted with most of his temporal affairs than many of his neighbors, and seldom knew when, and by whom his forage for winter was gathered in, or how many milk kine he had, or whence his table was furnished, &c.

He did not make it his custom to visit his people in their own houses, unless he was sent for by the sick; or he heard that they were under some special affliction. Instead of visiting from house to house, he used to preach frequently at private meetings in particular neighborhoods; and often call the young people and children to his own house, when he used to pray with them, and treat with them in a manner suited to their years and circumstances; and he catechised the children in public every Sabbath in the summer. And he used sometimes to propose questions to particular young persons in writing, for them to answer after a proper time given them to prepare. In putting out these questions, he endeavored to suit them to the age, genius, and abilities of those to whom they were given. His questions were generally such as required but a short answer; and yet could not be answered without a particular know-

* Different preachers, like all other public speakers, are possessed of exceedingly different gifts; and therefore one plan, however excellent on the whole, cannot be adopted advantageously by all. In one, clearness of understanding and correctness of *judgment* are most prominent; in another, a lively and fertile *imagination* prevails; and a third excels in strength of *memory*. Some have a greater facility of expression at leisure, by the pen; and others experience more freedom when their senses and feelings are roused by their appearance in public. The man who excels in a sound *judgment* seldom possesses a lively imagination; he therefore should write the more with a view to give *animation* to his compositions. He should secure in his notes pertinent quotations of Scripture, apt comparisons, Scripture allusions, and historic facts. The preacher, whose *fancy* is active and excursive, should labor to secure a well digested *plan*, argumentatively just, and naturally connected. This will prevent his running into a wordy, declamatory strain.—As to *memory*, there are two sorts, the verbal, and the scientific or systematic. He who has the former may soon preach *memoriter*;—after writing *all*, or without writing *any*. But let him ever watch, lest he enter into the temptation of plagiary; his quoting, however, long passages from the holy Scriptures, when apposite, will be always acceptable; and occasionally, when avowed, the words of other authors. The scientific memory should guard against too much analysis in a sermon, and often choose for the subject of discussion historical passages, or any others which are best treated in the way of observation; which in time will effectually counteract the opposite tendency to explain what is clear, and to analyze without profit.

ledge of some historical part of the Scripture; and therefore led, and even obliged persons to study the Bible.

He did not neglect visiting his people from house to house because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one part of the work of a gospel minister; but because he supposed that ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own talents and circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope thereby to promote the great ends of the ministry. He observed, that some had a talent for entertaining and profiting by occasional visits among their people. He supposed such had a call to spend a great deal of their time in visiting their people; but he looked on his own talents to be quite otherwise. He was not able to enter into a free conversation with every person he met, and in an easy manner turn it to what topic he pleased, without the help of others, and, it may be, against their inclination. He therefore found that his visits of this kind must be in a great degree unprofitable. It appeared to him, that he could do the greatest good to souls, and most promote the interest of Christ, by preaching and writing, and conversing with persons under religious impressions in his study; whither he encouraged all such to repair; where they might be sure, in ordinary cases, to find him, and to be allowed easy access to him; and where they were treated with all desirable tenderness, kindness, and familiarity.

In times, therefore, of the revival of religion among his people, his study was thronged with persons who came to lay open their spiritual concerns to him, and seek his advice and direction. These he received with great freedom and pleasure, and there he had the best opportunity to deal in the most particular manner with each one. He was a skilful guide to souls under spiritual difficulties; and was therefore sought unto, not only by his own people, but by many who lived scores of miles off. He became such, partly by his own experimental acquaintance with divine things, and unwearied study of God's word, and partly by his having so much concern with souls under spiritual troubles; for he had not been settled in the work of the ministry many years before the Spirit of God was wonderfully poured out on his people, by which a great concern about their souls became almost universal, and a great number were hopefully the subjects of saving conversion.

There was a very remarkable outpouring of God's Holy Spirit in this part of America, in the years 1740 and 1741, and in which Northampton largely partook. Mr. Edwards, at this time, had to deal not only with his own people, but with multitudes of others. The report that the same things were at Northampton some years before, and Mr. Edwards's fame for knowledge, piety, and great acquaintance with experimental religion, naturally led both ministers and people, from almost all parts of New England, to look to him for direction and assistance, in this extraordinary time. Being earnestly solicited by ministers and people to come and preach among them, he went to many; though he was not able to gratify all who desired him; and his preaching was attended with great success.

As many of the ministers and people in New England had been unacquainted with such things, they were greatly exposed to *run wild*, and (by the subtle temptations of the devil) actually did go into great extremes, both as opposers and friends to the work of God. Mr. Edwards was greatly helpful by his direction and assistance against the two opposite extremes, in conversation preaching and writing. His publications on

this occasion were of great and extensive service; especially a sermon preached at New Haven, Sept. 10th, 1741, on *The distinguishing marks of a work of the Spirit of God, &c.*—his *Thoughts concerning the present revival of Religion in New England, &c.*, and his *Treatise on Religious Affections.* All which might be justly considered by the church of Christ as a wise and friendly voice behind them, saying, "This is the way, walk therein;" especially the last mentioned Treatise, which has been esteemed by many the best that has been writen on that subject; setting the distinction between true and false religion in the most clear and striking light. And to the same purpose is *The Life of the Rev. David Brainerd, with reflections and observations;* published by Mr. Edwards in 1749. Mr. Edwards was, what some would call, a rigid *Calvinist.* Those doctrines of Calvinism which have been most objected against, and given the greatest offence, appeared to him scriptural, reasonable and important; and he thought that to give them up, was in effect to give up all. He therefore looked upon those who, calling themselves Calvinists, were for softening down the truth, that they might conform it more to the taste of those who are most disposed to object against it, were really betraying the cause they pretended to espouse; and were paving the way not only to Arminianism, but to Deism. For if these doctrines were relinquished, he did not see where a man could set his foot down with consistency short of Deism, or even Atheism itself; or rather, universal Skepticism.—He judged that nothing was wanting, but to have these doctrines *properly stated* and *judiciously defended,* in order to their appearing most agreeable to reason and common sense, as well as doctrines of revelation; and that this therefore was the only effectual method to convince, or silence and put to shame the opposers of them. All will be able to satisfy themselves of the truth of this by reading his works: and especially his books on *The Freedom of the Will,* and *Original Sin.*

In this view of things, he thought it of importance that ministers should be very critical in examining candidates for the ministry, with respect to their *principles,* as well as their religious dispositions and morals. And on this account he met with considerable difficulty and opposition in some instances. His opinion was, that an erroneous or unfaithful minister was likely to do more hurt than good to the church of Christ; and therefore he could not have any hand in introducing a man into the ministry, unless he appeared *sound in the faith,* and manifested, to the judgment of charity, a *disposition to be faithful.*

CHAPTER IV.

HIS DISMISSION FROM NORTHAMPTON, WITH THE OCCASION AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF IT.

WHATEVER belongs to man, or more correctly, whatever is properly his *own,* bears the mark of mutability. Mr. Edwards's labors at Northampton were crowned, at different periods of his ministry there, with eminent success. But a root of bitterness sprung up, and many were defiled. The transactions contained in this chapter, though unpleasant, may afford, to a serious and reflecting mind, much instruction. If that people were more depraved than Christian churches in common, after enjoying for so long

a period the stated instructions and prayers of so eminent a pastor; how great the depravity of human nature, to be capable of such ingratitude and such a reverse! Thus it was with Ephraim of old: "When I would," saith God, "have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness (or the evils) of Samaria." But if the people in question were no more depraved than ourselves, let us learn caution, and beware of unreasonable and inordinate attachment to customs—let us contemplate with proper emotions the instability of all human affairs —the folly and danger of trusting in man—and remember that we depend on God for the preservation of the closest friendships—and that the best ministers, without the continued supply of the Holy Spirit on the minds of their people, have no sure interest in their affections; people to whom they have been most useful, and who were long most attached to them. —Human nature has occasionally shown itself in every age to be the same. After the most extraordinary manifestation of divine power and goodness, "the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness." And after the most awful and impressive instructions, the Lord had to say to Moses, "Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves."

For many years, Mr. Edwards was very happy in the love and esteem of his people, and there was during that period the greatest prospect of his living and dying so. Indeed he was almost the last minister in all New England that would have been thought likely to be opposed by his people. But the event proved, how incompetent *we* are to decipher those consequences which depend on human volitions.—In the year 1744, about six years before the final rupture, Mr. Edwards was informed that some young persons in town who were members of the church, had books in their possession which they employed to promote lascivious and obscene discourse among the young people. Upon inquiry, a number of persons testified, that they had heard one and another, from time to time, talk obscenely; as what they were led to by reading a book or books, which they had among them. Mr. Edwards thought the brethren of the church ought to look into the matter; and in order to introduce it, he preached a sermon from Heb. xii. 15, 16, "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau," &c. After sermon, he desired the brethren of the church to stay, and told them what information he had got; and proposed, whether they thought proper to take any measures to examine into the matter. They with one consent, and much zeal, manifested it to be their opinion, that it ought to be inquired into; and proceeded to choose a number of men, to assist their pastor in examining into the affair. Upon which Mr. Edwards appointed the time for their meeting at his house, and then read a catalogue of the names of young persons, whom he desired to come to his house at the same time. Some were the accused, and some witnesses; but it was not then declared of which number any particular person was.

When the names were published, it appeared that there were but few of the considerable families in the town, to which some of the persons named did not belong, or were nearly related. Whether this was the occasion of the alteration or not, before the day appointed came, how-

ever, a great number of the heads of families altered their minds, and declared, that they did not think proper to proceed as they had done; that their children should not be called to an account in such a way, &c. The town was suddenly all in a blaze. This strengthened the hands of the accused, some refused to appear, and others who did appear behaved with a great degree of insolence, and contempt of the authority of the church. And little or nothing could be done further in the affair.

This was the occasion of weakening Mr. Edwards's hands in the work of the ministry, especially among the young people, with whom by this means he greatly lost his influence. It doubtless laid a foundation, and will help to account for the surprising events which will be related. He certainly had no great visible success after this; the influences of God's Holy Spirit were greatly withheld, and security and carnality much increased.*

Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Edwards's grandfather and predecessor, was of the opinion that unconverted persons, considered as such, had a right in the sight of God, or by his appointment, to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; that therefore it was their *duty* to come to that ordinance, though they knew they had no true goodness, or gospel holiness. He maintained, that visible Christianity does not consist in a profession or appearance of that wherein true holiness or real Christianity consists; that therefore, the profession which persons make in order to be received as visible members of Christ's church, ought not to be such as to express or imply a real compliance with, or consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, or a hearty embracing of the gospel. He formed a short profession for persons to make, in order to be admitted into the church, answerable to this principle; and accordingly persons were admitted into the church, and to the sacrament, on those terms. Mr. Stoddard's principle at first made a great noise in the country; and he was opposed, as introducing something contrary to the principles and practice of almost all the churches in New England: and the matter was publicly controverted between him and Dr. Increase Mather, of Boston. However, through Mr. Stoddard's great influence over the people of Northampton, it was introduced there, though not without opposition; by degrees it spread very much among ministers and people in that county, and in other parts of New England. Mr. Edwards had some hesitation about this matter when he first settled at Northampton, but did not receive such a degree of conviction, as to prevent his adopting it with a good conscience, for some years. But at length his doubts increased, which put him upon examining it thoroughly, by searching the Scripture, and reading such books as were written on the subject. The result was a full conviction that it was wrong, and that he could not retain the practice with a good conscience. He was fully convinced, that to be a *visible Christian* was to put on the visibility or appearance of a real Christian; that the profession of Christianity was a profession of that wherein real Christianity consists; and therefore that no person who rejected Christ in his heart, could make such a profession consistent with truth. And as the ordinance of the Lord's supper was instituted for none but *visible* professing Christians, none but those who

* What an awful warning to all professors, and especially to young people! Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Little do the giddy and the gay think how their levities operate, and what seeds of distress and sorrow they are sowing for themselves and others. Wo unto you that *thus* laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep! How desirable it should be *penitentially* here, and not *despairingly* hereafter.

are *real* Christians have a right in the sight of God to come to that ordinance: and consequently that none ought to be admitted thereto, who do not make a profession of real Christianity, and so be received in a judgment of charity as true friends to Jesus Christ.

When Mr. Edwards's sentiments were known (in the spring of the year 1744) it gave great offence, and the town was put into a great ferment: and before he was heard in his own defence, or it was known by many what his principles were, the general cry was to have him dismissed, as what alone would satisfy them. This was evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, as they neglected the most proper means of understanding the matter in dispute, and persisted in a refusal to attend to what Mr. Edwards had to say in defence of his principles. From beginning to end, they opposed the measures which had the best tendency to compromise and heal the difficulty; and with much zeal pursued those which were calculated to make a separation certain and speedy. He thought of preaching on the subject, that they might know what were his sentiments, and the grounds of them (of both of which he was sensible that most of them were quite ignorant), before they took any step for a separation.—But that he might do nothing to increase the tumult, he first proposed the thing to the church's standing committee; supposing that if he entered on the subject publicly with their cousent, it would prevent the ill consequences which otherwise he feared would follow. But the most of them strenuously opposed it. Upon which he gave it over for the present, as what in such circumstances would rather blow up the fire to a greater height, than answer the good ends proposed.

Mr. Edwards was sensible that his principles were not understood, but misrepresented through the country; and finding that his people were then too warm calmly to attend to the matter in controversy, he proposed to print what he had to say on the point; as this seemed to be the only way left him to have a fair hearing. Accordingly his people consented to put off calling a council, till what he should write was published. But they manifested great uneasiness in waiting, before it came out of the press; and when it was published, it was read but by very few of them. Mr. Edwards being sensible of this, renewed his proposal to preach upon it, and at a meeting of the brethren of the church asked their consent in the following terms: "I desire that the brethren would manifest their consent, that I should declare the reasons of my opinion relating to full communion in the church, in lectures appointed for that end; not as an act of authority, or as putting the power of declaring the whole counsel of God out of my hands; but for peace' sake, and to prevent occasion of strife." This was answered in the negative. He then proposed that it should be left to a few of the neighboring ministers, whether it was not, all things considered, reasonable that he should be heard in this matter from the pulpit, before the affair should be brought to an issue. But this also passed in the negative.

However, having had the advice of the ministers and messengers of the neighboring churches, who met at Northampton to advise them under their difficulties, he proceeded to appoint a lecture in order to preach on the subject, proposing to do so weekly till he had finished what he had to say. On Monday there was a society meeting, in which a vote was passed to choose a committee to go to Mr. Edwards, and desire him not to preach lectures on the subject in controversy, according to his declaration and

appointment: accordingly, a committee of three men, chosen for this purpose, waited on him. However, Mr. Edwards thought proper to proceed according to his proposal, and consequently preached a number of sermons, till he had finished what he had to say on the subject. These lectures were very thinly attended by his own people; but great numbers of strangers from the neighboring towns attended them, so many as to make above half the congregation. This was in February and March, 1750.

The calling of a decisive council to determine the matter of difference was now more particularly attended to on both sides. Mr. Edwards had before this insisted, from time to time, that they were by no means ripe for such a procedure; as they had not yet given him a fair hearing, whereby perhaps the need of such a council would be superseded. He observed, "That it was exceedingly unbecoming to manage religious affairs of the greatest importance, in a ferment and tumult, which ought to be managed with great solemnity, deep humiliation, submission to the awful frowns of heaven, humble dependence on God, with fervent prayer and supplication to him; that therefore, for them to go about such an affair as they did, would be greatly to the dishonor of God and religion; a way in which a people cannot expect a blessing." Thus having without effect, used all means to bring them to a calm and charitable temper, he consented that a decisive council should be called without any further delay.

But a difficulty attended the choice of a council, which was for some time insuperable. It was agreed, that the council should be mutually chosen, one half by the pastor, and the other half by the church; but the people insisted upon it, that he should be confined in his choice to the county. Mr. Edwards thought this an unreasonable restraint, as it was known that the ministers and churches in that county were almost universally against him in the controversy. He indeed did not suppose that the business of the proposed council would be to determine whether his opinion was right or not; but whether any possible way could be devised for an accommodation between pastor and people, and to use their wisdom and endeavor in order to effect it. And if they found this impracticable, they must determine, whether what ought in justice to be done had already actually been attempted, so that there was nothing further to be demanded by either of the parties concerned, before a separation should take place. And if he was dismissed by them, it would be their business to set forth to the world in what manner and for what cause he was dismissed: all which were matters of great importance to him, and required upright and impartial judges. Now considering the great prejudice a difference in religious opinions is apt to beget, and the close connection of the point in which most of the ministers and the churches in the county differed from him, with the matter to be decided, he did not think they could be reasonably looked upon so impartial judges, as that the matter ought to be wholly left to them. Besides, he thought the case, being so new and extraordinary, required the ablest judges in the land. For these reasons, and some others which he offered, he insisted upon liberty to go out of the county, for those members of the proposed council in which he was to have a choice. The people strenuously and obstinately opposing him in this, at length agreed to leave the matter to a council, consisting of the ministers and messengers of the five neighboring churches; who, after they had met twice upon it, and had the case largely debated before them, were *equally divided*, and therefore left the matter undetermined.

However they were all agreed, that Mr. Edwards ought to have liberty to go out of the county for *some* of the council. And at the next church meeting (the 26th of March) Mr. Edwards offered to join with them in calling a council, if they would consent that he should choose *two* of the churches out of the county, in case the council consisted of but *ten* churches. The church however refused to comply with this at one meeting after another repeatedly; and proceeded to call a church meeting and choose a moderator, in order to act without their pastor But, to pass by many particulars, at length, at a meeting of the church, convened by their pastor, May 3d, they voted their consent to his proposal of going out of the county for two of the churches that should be applied to. And then they proceeded to make choice of the ten ministers and churches, of which the council should consist. Accordingly the churches were applied to, and the council was convened on the 19th of June. After they had made some fruitless attempts for a composition between the pastor and the church, they passed a resolution by a majority of one voice* only, to the following purpose: "That it is expedient that the pastoral relation between Mr. Edwards and his church be immediately dissolved, if the people still persist in desiring it." And it being publicly put to the people, whether they still insisted on Mr. Edwards's dismission from the pastoral office over them? A great majority (above two hundred against twenty) voted for his dismission; and he was accordingly dismissed, June 22, 1750.

The dissenting part of the council entered their protest against this proceeding, judging that it was too much in a hurry, considering the past conduct and present temper of the people. And some of that part of the council who were for the separation, expressed themselves surprised at the uncommon zeal manifested by the people in their voting for a dismission; which evidenced to them, and all observing spectators, that they were far from a temper of mind becoming such a solemn and awful transaction, considered in all its circumstances.

Being thus dismissed, he preached his farewell sermon on the 1st of July, from 2 Cor. i. 14. The doctrine he observed from the words was this, "Ministers, and the people that have been under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal, at the day of judgment." It was a remarkably solemn and affecting discourse, and was published at the desire of some of the hearers. After Mr. Edwards was dismissed from Northamptom, he preached there occasionally, when they had no other preacher to supply the pulpit: till at length a great uneasiness was manifested by many of the people, at his preaching there at all. Upon which the committee for supplying the pulpit, called the town together, to know their minds with respect to that matter; when they voted that it was not agreeable to their minds that he should preach among them. Accordingly, while Mr. Edwards was in the town, and they had no other minister to preach to them, they carried on public worship among themselves.

Every one must be sensible that this was a great trial to Mr. Edwards. He had been nearly twenty-four years among that people; and his labors

* One of the churches which Mr. Edwards chose did not see fit to join the council. However, the minister of that church being at Northampton, was desired by Mr. Edwards and the church to sit in council and act, which he did. But there being no messenger from the church, the council was not full, and there was a disparity; by which means there was one vote more for an immediate dismission, than against it.

had been, to all appearance, from time to time greatly blessed among them: and a great number looked on him as their spiritual father, who had been the happy instrument of turning them from darkness to light, and plucking them as brands out of the burning. And they had from time to time professed that they looked upon it as one of their greatest privileges to have such a minister, and manifested their great love and esteem of him, to such a degree, that (as St. Paul says of the Galatians) "if it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him." And they had a great interest in *his* affection: he had borne them on his heart, and carried them in his bosom for many years; exercising a tender concern and love for them: for their good he was always writing, contriving, laboring; for them he had poured out ten thousand fervent prayers; in their good he had rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil; and they were dear to him above any other people under heaven. Now to have *this people* turn against him, and thrust him out from among them, stopping their ears, and running upon him with furious zeal, not allowing him to defend himself by giving him a fair hearing; and even refusing so much as to hear him preach; many of them surmising and publicly speaking many ill things as to his ends and designs! Surely this must come very near to him, and try his spirit. The words of the Psalmist seem applicable to this case: "It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it him that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him. But it was THOU—my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

Let us, therefore, now *behold the man!*—The calm sedateness of his mind; his meekness and humility in great and violent opposition, and injurious treatment; his resolution and steady conduct through all this dark and terrible storm were truly wonderful, and cannot be set in so beautiful and affecting a light by any description, as they appeared in to his friends, who were eye-witnesses.

Mr. Edwards had a numerous and chargeable family, and little or no income, exclusive of his salary; and, considering how far he was advanced in years; the general disposition of people, who want a minister, to prefer a young man who has never been settled, to one who has been dismissed from his people; and what misrepresentations were made of his principles through the country, it looked to him not at all probable that he should ever have opportunity to be again settled in the work of the ministry, if he was dismissed from Northampton: and he was not inclined or able to take any other course, or go into any other business to get a living: so that beggary as well as disgrace stared him full in the face, if he persisted in his principles. When he was fixed in his principles, and before they were publicly known, he told some of his friends. that if he discovered and persisted in them, it would most likely issue in his dismission and disgrace; and the ruin of himself and family, as to their *temporal* interests. He therefore first sat down and counted the cost, and deliberately took up the cross, when it was set before him in its full weight and magnitude; and in direct opposition to all *worldly* views and motives. And therefore his conduct in these circumstances, was a remarkable exercise and discovery of his conscientiousness; and his readiness to deny himself, and forsake all that he had, to follow Christ

A man must have a considerable degree of the spirit of a martyr, to go on with the steadfastness and resolution with which he did. He ventured wherever truth and duty appeared to lead him, unmoved at the threatening dangers on every side.

However, God did not forsake him. As he gave him those inward supports by which he was able in patience to possess his soul, and courageously row on in the storm, in the face of boisterous winds beating hard upon him, and in the midst of gaping waves threatening to swallow him up; so he soon appeared for him in his providence, even beyond all his expectations. His correspondents and other friends in Scotland, hearing of his dismission, and fearing it might be the means of bringing him into worldly straits, generously contributed a considerable sum, and sent it over to him. And God did not leave him without tender, valuable friends at Northampton. For a small number of his people who opposed his dismission from the beginning, and some who acted on neither side, but after his dismission adhered to him, under the influence of their great esteem and love of Mr. Edwards, were willing, and thought themselves able to maintain him; and insisted upon it that it was his duty to stay among them, as a distinct and separate congregation from the body of the town, who had rejected him.

Mr. Edwards could not see it to be his duty to stay among them, as this would probably be a means of perpetuating an unhappy division in the town; and there was to him no prospect of doing the good there, which would counterbalance the evil. However, that he might do all he could to satisfy his tender and afflicted friends, he consented to ask the advice of an ecclesiastical council. Accordingly a council was called, and met at Northampton on the 15th of May, 1751. The town on this occasion was put into a great tumult. They who were active in Mr. Edwards's dismission supposed, though without any good ground, that he was contriving with his friends, again to introduce himself at Northampton. They drew up a remonstrance against their proceedings, and laid it before the council (though they would not acknowledge them to be an ecclesiastical council), containing many heavy, though groundless insinuations and charges against Mr. Edwards, and bitter accusations of the party who had adhered to him; but refused to appear and support any of their charges, or so much as to give the gentlemen of the council any opportunity to confer with them about the affair depending, though it was diligently sought. The council having heard what Mr. Edwards and they who adhered to him had to say, advised, agreeably to Mr. Edwards's judgment, that he should leave Northampton, and accept of the mission to which he was invited at Stockbridge; of which a more particular account will be given.

Many other facts relative to this sorrowful and surprising affair (the most so doubtless of any of the kind, that ever happened in New-England, and perhaps in any part of the Christian world) might be related; but as this more general history of it may be sufficient to answer the ends proposed, viz., to rectify some gross misrepresentations that have been made of the matter, and discover the great trial Mr Edwards had herein, it is thought best to suppress other particulars. As a proper close to this melancholy story, and to confirm and further illustrate what has been related, the following letter from Joseph Hawley, Esq. (a gentleman who was very active in the transactions of this whole affair, and very much a

leader in it) to the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Sutton, published in a weekly news paper in Boston, May 19th, 1760, is here inserted.

TO THE REV. MR. HALL, OF SUTTON.

Northampton, May 9, 1760.

REV. SIR:—I have often wished that every member of the two ecclesiastical councils that formerly sat in Northampton, upon the unhappy differences between our former most worthy and Rev. pastor, Mr Jonathan Edwards, and the church here, whereof you were a member; I say, sir, I have often wished that every one of them truly knew my own sense of my own conduct in the affairs that the one and the other of said councils are privy to. As I have long apprehended it to be my duty not only to humble myself before God for what was unchristian and sinful in my conduct before the said councils, but also to confess my faults to *them*, and take shame to myself before them; so I have often studied with myself in what manner it was practicable for me to do it. When I understood that you, sir, and Mr. Eaton, were to be at Cold Spring at the time of the late council, I resolved to improve the opportunity fully to open my mind then to you and him thereon; and thought that probably some method might be then thought of in which my reflections on myself, touching the matters above hinted at, might be communicated to most if not all the gentlemen aforesaid who did not reside in this county. But you know, sir, how difficult it was for us to converse together by ourselves, when at Cold Spring, without giving umbrage to that people; I therefore proposed writing to you upon the matters which I had then opportunity only most summarily to suggest; which you, sir, signified would be agreeable to you. I therefore now undertake what I then proposed, in which I humbly ask the divine aid; and that I may be made most freely willing to confess my sin and guilt to you and the world in those instances which I have reason to suppose fell under your notice, as they were public and notorious transactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you, sir, and all others who had knowledge thereof, had just cause to be offended at me.

And in the first place, sir, I apprehend that, with the church and people of Northampton, I sinned and erred exceedingly in consenting and laboring that there should be so early a dismission of Mr. Edwards from his pastoral relation to us, even upon the supposition that he was really in a mistake in the disputed point: not only because the dispute was upon matters so very disputable in themselves, and at the greatest remove from fundamental, but because Mr. Edwards so long had approved himself a most faithful and painful pastor to the said church. He also changed his sentiments in that point, wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth; and had made known his sentiments with great moderation, and upon great deliberation, against all worldly motives, from mere fidelity to his great Master, and a tender regard to the souls of his flock, as we had the highest reason to judge. These considerations now seem to me sufficient; and would (if we had been of a right spirit) have greatly endeared him to his people, and made us to the last degree reluctant to part with him, and disposed us to the exercise of the greatest candor, gentleness and moderation. How much of the reverse whereof appeared in us, I need not tell you, sir, who were an eye-witness of our temper and conduct.

And although it does not become me to pronounce decisively on a point so disputable as what was then in dispute; yet I beg leave to say, that I really apprehend that it is of the highest moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular, most solicitously to inquire, whether, like the Pharisees and lawyers in John the Baptist's time, we did not reject the council of God against ourselves, in rejecting Mr. Edwards, and his doctrine, which was the ground of his dismission. And I humbly conceive that it highly imports us all of this church most seriously and impartially to examine what that most worthy and able divine published, about that time, in support of the same, whereby he being dead yet speaketh. But there were three things, sir, especially in my own particular conduct before the first council, which have been justly matter of great grief and much trouble to me almost ever since, viz.:

In the first place, I confess, sir, that I acted very immodestly and abusively to you, as well as injuriously to the church and myself, when, with much zeal and unbecoming assurance, I moved the council that they would interpose to silence and stop you in an address you were making one morning to the people, wherein you were, if I do not forget, briefly exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affection and harmony that had long subsisted between them and their Rev. Pastor, and the great comfort and profit which they apprehended that they had received from his ministry; for which, sir, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and I think that we ought, instead of opposing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulness.

Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection and reverend respect and esteem for Mr. Edwards, which he had highly merited of me, was my strenuously opposing the adjournment of the matters submitted to that council, for about two months; for which I declare myself unfeignedly sorry; and I with shame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, decisive, vehement, and very immodest manner.

But, sir, the most criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conscious of, was my exhibiting to that council a set of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reasonableness and necessity of Mr. Edwards's dismission, in case no accommodation was then effected with mutual consent; which writing, by clear implication, contained some severe, uncharitable, and, if I remember right, groundless and slanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, expressed in bitter language. And although the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I foolishly and sinfully consented to copy it; and, as agent for the church, to read it, and deliver it to the council; which I could never have done if I had not a wicked relish for perverse things; which conduct of mine I confess was very sinful, and highly provoking to God; for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.

As to the church's remonstrance, as it was called, which their committee preferred to the last of the said councils (to all which I was consenting, and in the composing whereof I was very active, as also in bringing the church to their vote upon it); I would, in the first place, only observe that I do not remember any thing, in that small part of it which was plainly expressive of the expediency of Mr. Edwards's resettlement here as pastor to a part of the church, which was very exceptionable. But as to all the residue, which was much the greatest part thereof (and I am

not certain that any part was wholly free), it was every where interlarded with unchristian bitterness, sarcastical and unmannerly insinuations. It contained divers direct, grievous and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. Edwards, which I have since good reason to suppose, were all founded on jealous and uncharitable mistakes, and so were really gross slanders; also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards's adherents, and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which, if not wholly false and groundless, yet were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced, that the whole of that composure, excepting the small part thereof above-mentioned, was totally unchristian, a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel, against Mr. Edwards and his particular friends, especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray I may remember it with deep abasement and penitence, all my days. Nor do I now think that the church's conduct in refusing to appear, and attend before that council to support the charges and allegations in the said remonstrance against Mr. Edwards and the said brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated by all the subtle answers that were given to the said demand; nor do I think that our conduct in that instance was capable of a defence. For it appears to me, that by making such charges against them before the said council, we necessarily so far gave that council jurisdiction; and I own, with sorrow and regret, that I zealously endeavored that the church should perseveringly refuse to appear before the said council for the purpose aforesaid; which I humbly pray God to forgive.

Another part of my conduct, sir, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty sorrow, was my obstinate opposition to the last council's having any conference with the church; which the said council earnestly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church, as you know, finally denied. I think it discovered a great deal of pride and vain sufficiency in the church, and showed them to be very opinionative, especially the chief sticklers, one of whom I was, and think it was running a most presumptuous risk, and acting the part of proud scorners, for us to refuse hearing, and candidly and seriously considering what that council could say or oppose to us; among whom there were divers, justly in great reputation for grace and wisdom.

In these instances, sir, of my conduct, and in others (to which you were not privy) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, I now see that I was very much influenced by vast pride, self-sufficiency, ambition, and vanity. I appear to myself vile, and doubtless much more so to others who are more impartial; and do in the review thereof, abhor myself, and repent sorely: and if my own heart condemns me, it behooves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater and knoweth all things. I hereby own, sir, that such treatment of Mr. Edwards, wherein I was so deeply concerned and active, was particularly and very aggravatedly sinful and ungrateful in me, because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as to a most able, diligent and faithful pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me, as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner.

Indeed, sir, I must own, that by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. Edwards within the time of our most unhappy disputes with

him, and especially in and about that abominable "remonstrance," I have so far symbolized with Balaam, Ahitophel, and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I attend to the most painful similitude. And I freely confess, that on account of my conduct above-mentioned I have the greatest reason to tremble at those most solemn and awful words of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 6, "Whoso shall offend one of these," &c., and those in Luke, x. 16, "He that despiseth you," &c.; and I am most sorely sensible that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord, and the persecutors of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood, blessed be God, cleanseth from all sin. On the whole, sir, I am convinced, that I have the greatest reason to say as David, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities; create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me: restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit." Psalm li. 1–3, 9–12.

And I humbly apprehend that it greatly concerns the church of Northampton most seriously to examine, whether the many hard speeches, spoken by many particular members against their former pastor, some of which the church really countenanced (and especially those spoken by the church as a body, in that most vile "remonstrance"), are not so odious and ungodly, as to be utterly incapable of defence: whether the said church were not guilty of a great sin in being so willing and disposed, for so slight a cause, to part with so faithful and godly a minister as Mr. Edwards was; and whether ever God will hold us guiltless till we cry to him for Christ's sake to pardon and save us from that judgment which such ungodly deeds deserve. And I most heartily wish and pray that the town and church of Northampton would seriously and carefully examine whether they have not abundant cause to judge that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God; and whether those of us who were concerned in that most awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can ever more reasonably expect God's favor and blessing, till our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the Most High, and have been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ, by persecuting and vexing that just man and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust on account of it, and till we openly, in full terms, and without balking the matter, confess the same before the world, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness of God, and do what we can to honor the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aspirations which we unjustly cast upon him; since God has been pleased to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness. Such terms I am persuaded the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myself, and this way I most solemnly propose to take myself (if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity), that by so making free confession to God and man of my

sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to myself, I may give glory to the God of Israel, and do what in me lies, to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleased to spare my life to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long.

Although I made the substance of almost all the foregoing reflections in writing, but not exactly in the same manner, to Mr. Edwards and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. Edwards's life, and before he removed from Stockbridge, and I have reason to believe that he, from his great candor and charity, heartily forgave me and prayed for me: yet because that was not generally known, I look on myself obliged to take further steps; for while I kept silence, my bones waxed old, &c. For all these my great sins therefore, in the first place, I humbly and most earnestly ask forgiveness of God; in the next place, of the relatives and near friends of Mr. Edwards.—I also ask the forgiveness of all those who were called Mr. Edwards's adherents; and of all the members of the ecclesiastical councils above-mentioned; and lastly, of all Christian people, who have had any knowledge of these matters.

I have no desire, sir, that you should make any secret of this letter: but that you would communicate the same to whom you shall judge proper: and I purpose, if God shall give me opportunity, to procure it to be published in some one of the public newspapers; for I cannot devise any other way of making known my sentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith, and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foresee will be made thereon. Probably when it comes out, some of my acquaintance will pronounce me quite overrun with vapors; others will be furnished with matter for mirth and pleasantry; others will cursorily pass it over, as relating to matters quite stale: but some, I am persuaded, will rejoice to see me brought to a sense of my sin and duty; and I myself shall be conscious that I have done something of what the nature of the case admits, toward undoing what is, and long has been, to my greatest remorse and trouble that it was ever done.

Sir, I desire that none would entertain a thought from my having spoken respectfully of Mr. Edwards, that I am disaffected to our present pastor; for the very reverse is true; and I have a reverend esteem, real value, and hearty affection for him, and bless God, that he has, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, given us one to succeed Mr. Edwards, who, as I have reason to hope, is truly faithful.

I conclude this long letter, by heartily desiring your prayers, that my repentance of my sins above-mentioned may be unfeigned and genuine and such as God in infinite mercy, for Christ's sake, will accept; and I beg leave to subscribe myself, Sir, your real, though very unworthy friend, and obedient servant, JOSEPH HAWLEY.

CHAPTER V.

FROM HIS MISSION TO THE INDIANS UNTIL HIS DEATH.

SECTION I.

His Mission to the Indians at Stockbridge.

If we regard Mr. Edwards's deep acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and the influence of divine truth on his own heart; if we consider, also, his long experience in the work of the ministry, with his disposition to observe the operations of human minds and passions, and to improve such knowledge to the most profitable purposes, we may safely say, that there were but few men, if any, better qualified to conduct a mission among the Indians. But, on the other hand, it may be questioned, whether his recluse turn, his natural reserve, his contemplative habits, and the strong propensity of his mind closely to investigate abstractedly every difficult subject that presented itself, were not unfavorable traits for such a situation, however beneficial it might be for his own improvement. Mr. Edwards was qualified to shine in some departments of the seats of learning, and was afterwards called to preside over one; but when he was delegated to instruct savage Indians, there was occasion to suspect there was not a perfect suitableness in the appointment. On this, however, different persons may form different opinions; and it is our business now to give some account of this appointment.

The Indian mission at Stockbridge, a town in the western part of Massachusetts Bay, fifty miles from Northampton, being vacant by the death of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant, the honored and reverend commissioners for Indian affairs in Boston, who have the care and direction of it, applied to Mr. Edwards as the most suitable person they could think of to be intrusted with that mission. At the same time he was invited by the inhabitants of Stockbridge; and being advised by the council above-mentioned to accept of the invitation, he repaired to Stockbridge, and was introduced and fixed as a missionary to the Indians there, by an ecclesiastical council called for that purpose, August 8th, 1751.

When Mr. Edwards first engaged in the mission, there was a hopeful prospect of its being extensively serviceable, under his care and influence; not only to that tribe of Indians which was settled at Stockbridge, but among the Six Nations, some of whom were coming to Stockbridge to settle, bringing their own, and as many of their neighbors' children as they could get, to be educated and instructed there. For this end, a house for a boarding-school, which was projected by Mr. Sergeant, was erected on a tract of land appropriated to that use by the Indians at Stockbridge; where the Indian children, male and female, were to be educated, by being clothed and fed, and instructed by proper persons in useful learning. The boys were to be taught husbandry or mechanic trades, and the girls all sorts of women's work. For the encouragement of this design, some generous subscriptions were made both in England and America. The general court of the province of Massachusetts Bay did much to promote the affair, and provided lands for the Mohawks who should incline to come. And the generous Mr. Hollis, to encourage the scheme, ordered twenty-four Indian children to be educated on the same footing, wholly at his

cost. Also the Society in London, for propagating the gospel among the Indians in and about New England, directed their commissioners in Boston to do something considerable towards this design. But partly by reason of some unhappy differences that took place among those who had the chief management of this affair at Stockbridge, of which a particular account would not be proper in this place; and partly by the war breaking out between England and France, which is generally very fatal to such affairs among Indians, this hopeful prospect came to nothing.

Mr. Edwards's labors were attended with no remarkable visible success while at Stockbridge; though he performed the business of his mission to the good acceptance of the inhabitants in general, both English and Indians, and of the commissioners, who supported him honorably, and confided very much in his judgment and wisdom, in all matters relating to the mission. However Stockbridge proved to Mr. Edwards a more quiet, and, on many accounts, a much more comfortable situation than he was in before. It being so much in one corner of the country, his time was not so much taken up with company, as it was at Northampton, though many of his friends, from almost all parts of the land, often made him pleasant and profitable visits. And he had not so much concern and trouble with other churches as he was obliged to have when at Northampton, by being frequently sought to for advice, and called to assist in ecclesiastical councils. Here therefore he followed his beloved study more closely, and to better purpose than ever. In these six years he doubtless made swifter advances in knowledge than ever before, and added more to his manuscripts than in any equal space of time. And this was probably as *useful* a part of his life as any. For in this time he wrote the two last books that have been published by him* (of which a more particular account will be given hereafter), by which he has doubtless greatly served the church of Christ, and will be a blessing to many thousands yet unborn.

Thus, after his uprightness and faithfulness had been sufficiently tried at Northampton, his Divine Master provided for him a quiet retreat, which was rendered the more sweet by the preceding storm; and where he had a better opportunity to pursue and finish some important work which God had for him to do: so that when in his own judgment, as well as that of others, his usefulness seemed to be cut off, he found greater opportunities of service than ever.

SECTION II.

His being chosen President of New Jersey College.

While at Stockbridge, Mr. Edwards appears to have given full scope to his propensities and genius, stimulated by his ardent love of truth, and under the control of a correct judgment. While at Northampton his avocations were unavoidably numerous, and scarcely compatible with a profound attention to subjects he might be disposed to investigate; but at Stockbridge he found himself more at liberty in that respect. After having been so long in the ministry elsewhere, his pulpit preparations would require less time than before.—His studies were less interrupted by company and calls.—Former anxieties were now removed; his mind

* His Treatise on "The Will," and on "Original Sin"

was drawn more closely to God, from his past experience of the fickleness of men; and thereby his mind became more composed, more enlightened, and more elevated. Here he was led to investigate subjects of radical importance in morals and theology, and to trace them to their first principles. And here he published his masterpiece of inquiry and close reasoning, his Treatise on the Will, which completely established his character as an adept in metaphysical science, and a profound divine. The celebrity he obtained by this work, and very deservedly obtained, had, doubtless, no small influence on the trustees of New Jersey College, among other considerations, in looking to Mr. Edwards to become their President, on the death of Mr. Burr, his son-in-law.

The Rev. Aaron Burr, President of New Jersey College, died on the 24th of Sept. 1757; and, at the next meeting of the trustees, Mr. Edwards was chosen his successor; the news of which was quite unexpected, and not a little surprising to him. He looked on himself in many respects so unqualified for that business, that he wondered that gentlemen of so good judgment, and so well acquainted with him, as he knew some of the trustees were, should think of *him* for that place. He had many objections in his own mind against undertaking the business, both from his unfitness, and his particular circumstances; yet could not certainly determine that it was not his duty to accept it. The following extract of a letter which he wrote to the trustees, will give the reader a view of his sentiments and exercises on this occasion, as well as of the great designs he was deeply engaged in, and zealously prosecuting.

Stockbridge, 19th October, 1757.

Rev. and Hon. Gentlemen—I was not a little surprised on receiving the unexpected notice of your having made choice of me to succeed the late President Burr, as the head of Nassau Hall. I am much in doubt whether I am called to undertake the business, which you have done me the unmerited honor to choose me for. If some regard may be had for my outward comfort, I might mention the many inconveniences and great detriment which may be sustained by my removing with my numerous family, so far from all the estate I have in the world (without any prospect of disposing of it, under present circumstances, but with great loss), now when we have scarcely got over the trouble and damage sustained by our removal from Northampton, and have just begun to have our affairs in a comfortable situation for a subsistence in this place; and the expense I must immediately be at to put myself into circumstances tolerably comporting with the needful support of the honor of the office I am invited to; which will not well consist with my ability.

But this is not my main objection: the chief difficulties in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are these two: First, my own defects, unfitting me for such an undertaking, many of which are generally known; besides other, which my own heart is conscious of. I have a constitution, in many respects peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid solids; vapid, sizy and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanor; with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college. This makes me shrink at the thoughts of taking upon me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business,

attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness, and spirit of government; especially as succeeding one so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to every one to remark the wide difference. I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in algebra, and the higher parts of mathematics, and in the Greek classics; my Greek learning having been chiefly in the New Testament. The other thing is this; that my engaging in this business will not well consist with those views, and that course of employ in my study, which have long engaged and swallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.

And here, honored sirs, (emboldened, by the testimony I have now received of your unmerited esteem, to rely on your candor,) I will with freedom open myself to you.

My method of study, from my first beginning the work of the ministry, has been very much by writing; applying myself in this way, to improve every important hint; pursuing the clue to my utmost, when any thing in reading, meditation, or conversation, has been suggested to my mind, that seemed to promise light, in any weighty point; thus penning what appeared to me my best thoughts, on innumerable subjects for my own benefit. The longer I prosecuted my studies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleasant and profitable I found it. The further I travelled in this way, the more and wider the field opened, which has occasioned my laying out many things in my mind to do in this manner, if God should spare my life, which my heart hath been much upon: particularly many things against most of the prevailing errors of the present day, which I cannot with any patience see maintained (to the utter subverting of the gospel of Christ) with so high a hand, and so long continued a triumph, with so little control, when it appears so evident to me, that there is truly no foundation for any of this glorying and insult. I have already published something on one of the main points in dispute between the Arminians and Calvinists; and have it in view, God willing (as I have already signified to the public), in like manner to consider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it. But besides these, I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a *History of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history; considering the affair of Christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ; which I suppose to be of all others the grand design of God, and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all the divine operations and decrees; particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events; beginning from eternity and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God. and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affairs of redemption, which we have account of in history or prophecy; till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment. and consummation of all things; when it shall be said, *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.* Concluding my work,

with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity. This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell; considering the connected successive events and alterations in each, so far as the Scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural; a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine will appear to greatest advantage, in the brighest light, in the most striking manner, showing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.

I have also, for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work, which I call the *Harmony of the Old and New Testament*, in three parts. The first considering the prophecies of the Messiah, his redemption and kingdom; the evidences of their references to the Messiah, &c., comparing them all one with another, demonstrating their agreement, true scope, and sense; also considering all the various particulars wherein these prophecies have their exact fulfilment; showing the universal, precise, and admirable correspondence between predictions and events. The second part, considering the types of the Old Testament, showing the evidence of their being intended as representations of the great things of the gospel of Christ; and the agreement of the type with the antitype. The third and great part, considering the harmony of the Old and New Testament, as to doctrine and precept. In the course of this work, I find there will be occasion for an explanation of a very great part of the holy Scripture; which may, in such a view, be explained in a method, which to me seems the most entertaining and profitable, best tending to lead the mind to a view of the true spirit, design, life and soul of the Scriptures, as well as their proper use and improvement. I have also many other things in hand, in some of which I have made great progress, which I will not trouble you with an account of. Some of these things, if divine Providence favor, I should be willing to attempt a publication of. So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have for benefiting my fellow-creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak.

My heart is so much in these studies, that I cannot feel willing to put myself into an incapacity to pursue them any more in the future part of my life to such a degree as I must, if I undertake to go through the same course of employ, in the office of a president, that Mr. Burr did, instructing in all the languages, and taking the whole care of the instruction of one of the classes in all parts of learning, besides his other labors. If I should see light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I should be willing to take upon me the work of a president, so far as it consists in the general inspection of the whole society; and to be subservient to the school, as to their order and methods of study and instruction, assisting myself in immediate instruction in the arts and sciences (as discretion should direct and occasion serve, and the state of things require), especially the senior class: and added to all, should be willing to do the whole work of a professor of divinity, in public and private lectures, proposing questions to be answered, and some to be discussed in writing and free conversation, in meetings of graduates and others, appointed in proper seasons for these ends. It would be now out of my way, to spend time in a constant teaching of the languages, unless it be the Hebrew tongue; which I should be willing to improve myself in, by instructing others.

On the whole, I am much at a loss, with respect to the way of duty in this important affair: I am in doubt, whether, if I should engage in it, I should not do what both you and I would be sorry for afterwards. Nevertheless, I think the greatness of the affair, and the regard due to so worthy and venerable a body, as that of the trustees of Nassau Hall, requires my taking the matter into serious consideration. And unless you should appear to be discouraged by the things which I have now represented, as to any further expectation from me, I shall proceed to ask advice, of such as I esteem most wise, friendly and faithful: if after the mind of the commissioners in Boston is known, it appears that they consent to leave me at liberty, with respect to the business they have employed me in here."

In this suspense he determined to ask the advice of a number of gentlemen in the ministry, on whose judgment and friendship he could rely, and to act accordingly;—who, upon his and his people's desire, met at Stockbridge, January 4, 1758; and having heard Mr. Edwards's representation of the matter, and what his people had to say by way of objection against his removal, determined it was his duty to accept of the invitation to the presidency of the college. When they published their judgment and advice to Mr. Edwards and his people, he appeared uncommonly moved and affected with it, and fell into tears on the occasion, which was very unusual for him in the presence of others: and soon after said to the gentlemen, who had given their advice, that it was matter of wonder to him, that they could so easily, as they appeared to do, get over the objections he had made against his removal.—But as he thought it his duty to be directed by their advice, he should now endeavor cheerfully to undertake it, believing he was in the way of his duty.

Accordingly, having had, by the application of the trustees of the college, the consent of the commissioners to resign their mission; he girded up his loins, and set off from Stockbridge for Princeton in January. He left his family at Stockbridge, not to be removed till spring. He had two daughters at Princeton, Mrs. Burr, the widow of the late President Burr, and his oldest daughter that was unmarried. His arrival at Princeton was to the great satisfaction and joy of the college.

The corporation met as soon as could be with convenience, after his arrival at the college, when he was by them fixed in the president's chair. Whlle at Princeton, before his sickness, he preached in the college hall, Sabbath after Sabbath, to the great acceptance of the hearers; but did nothing as president, unless it was to give out some questions in divinity to the senior class, to be answered before him; each one having opportunity to study and write what he thought proper upon them. When they came together to answer them, they found so much entertainment and profit by it, especially by the light and instruction Mr. Edwards communicated in what he said upon the questions, when they had delivered what they had to say, that they spoke of it with the greatest satisfaction and wonder.

During this time Mr. Edwards seemed to enjoy an uncommon degree of the presence of God. He told his daughters he once had great exercise, concern and fear, relative to his engaging in that business; but since it now appeared, so far as he could see, that he was called of God to that place and work, he did cheerfully devote himself to it, leaving himself and the event with God, to order what seemed to him good.

The small-pox had now become very common in the country, and was then at Princeton, and likely to spread. And as Mr. Edwards had never had it, and inoculation was then practised with great success in those parts, he proposed to be inoculated, if the physician should advise to it, and the corporation should give their consent. Accordingly by the advice of the physician, and the consent of the corporation, he was inoculated February 13th. He had it favorably, and it was thought all danger was over; but a secondary fever set in, and by reason of a number of pustules in his throat, the obstruction was such, that the medicines necessary to check the fever, could not be administered. It therefore raged till it put an end to his life on the 22d of March, 1758, in the 55th year of his age.

After he was sensible that he could not survive that sickness, a little before his death he called his daughter to him, who attended him in his sickness, and addressed her in a few words, which were immediately taken down in writing, as near as could be recollected, and are as follows:—"Dear Lucy, it seems to me to be the will of God that I must shortly leave you; therefore, give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her, that the uncommon union which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue forever: and I hope she will be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now like to be left fatherless, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek a father who will never fail you. And as to my funeral, I would have it to be like Mr. Burr's; and any additional sum of money that might be expected to be laid out that way, I would have it disposed of to charitable uses."*

He said but very little in his sickness; but was an admirable instance of patience and resignation to the last. Just at the close of life, as some persons who stood by, expecting he would breathe his last in a few minutes, were lamenting his death, not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aspect on the interest of religion in general; to their surprise, not imagining that he heard, or ever would speak another word, he said, "Trust in God, and ye need not fear." These were his last words. What could have been more suitable to the occasion! And what need of more! In these is as much matter of instruction and support, as if he had written a volume. This is the only consolation to his bereaved friends, who are sensible of the loss they and the church of Christ have sustained in his death; God is all sufficient, and still has the care of his church.

He appeared to have the uninterrupted use of his reason to the last, and died with as much calmness and composure, to all appearance, as that with which one goes to sleep. The physician who inoculated and constantly attended him in his sickness, has the following words in his letter to Mrs. Edwards, on this occasion: "Never did any mortal man more fully and clearly evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation, and patient submission to the divine will, through every stage of his disease, than he. Not so much

* President Burr ordered, on his death-bed, that his funeral should not be attended with pomp and cost. He ordered that nothing should be expended but what was agreeable to the dictates of Christian decency; and that the sum which must be expended at a modish funeral, above the necessary cost of a decent one, should be given to the poor, out of his estate.

as one discontented expression, nor the least appearance of murmuring through the whole! And never did any person expire with more perfect freedom from pain; not so much as one distortion; but in the most proper sense of the words, he really fell asleep."

CHAPTER VI.

HIS PUBLICATIONS, MANUSCRIPTS, AND GENIUS AS A WRITER.

Mr. Edwards was greatly esteemed, and indeed celebrated, as an author, both in America and Europe. His publications naturally raise in the reader of judgment and moral taste a high opinion of his greatness and piety. His books met with a good reception in Scotland especially, and procured for him great esteem and applause. A gentleman of note there has the following words concerning Mr. Edwards, in a letter to one of his correspondents in America: "I looked on him as incomparably the greatest divine and [moral*] philosopher, in Britain or her colonies; and rejoiced that one so eminently qualified for teaching divinity was chosen president of New Jersey College." And in another letter, the same gentleman says: "Ever since I was acquainted with Mr. Edwards's writings, I have looked upon him as the greatest divine this age has produced." And a reverend gentleman from Holland observed: "That Mr. Edwards's writings, especially on the *Freedom of the Will*, were held in great esteem there; and that the professors of the celebrated academy presented their compliments to President Edwards." This gentleman further observes, that "Several members of the Classes of Amsterdam gave their thanks, by him, to pious Mr. Edwards, for his just observations on Mr. Brainerd's Life; which book was translated in Holland, and was highly approved by the University of Utrecht."

As these Memoirs are introductory to a complete edition of Mr. Edwards's Works, a professed enumeration of all his publications must be needless. Yet, as it is not desirable, on many accounts, to observe a chronological order in their arrangement, a view of those works which were published by himself, and the chief of his posthumous publications, according to the order of time, may be acceptable to many. For this, the reader is referred to the note below.†

Viewing Mr. Edwards as a writer of sermons, we cannot give him the epithet *eloquent*, in the common acceptation of the term. We see in

* This must have been the writer's meaning.

† 1731. A Sermon preached at Boston, on 1 Cor. i. 29, 30.
1734. Do. at Northampton, on Matt. xvi. 17.
1736. A Narrative of the work of God, &c.
1738. Five Discourses at Northampton.
1741. A Sermon preached at Enfield.
1741. Do. at New Haven, on 1 John iv. 1.
1741. Do. at Hatfield.
1742. Thoughts on the Revival.
1746. Religious Affections.
1747. On Prayer for a Revival.
1749. Ordination Sermon.
1749. Life of the Rev. David Brainerd.
1749. On Qualifications for Communion.
1752. A Reply to S. Williams's Answer.
1752. A Sermon preached at Newark, on James ii. 19.
1754. On the Freedom of the Will.
1758. On Original Sin.
N.B. This last was in the press when the author died. All his other works were collected from his papers after his decease; the principal of which were published in the following order:
1765. Eighteen Sermons, with his Life prefixed.
1774. The History of Redemption
1788. On the Nature of Virtue.
1788. God's Last End in the Creation.
1788. Thirty-three Sermons.
1789. Twenty Sermons.
1793. Miscellaneous Observations.
1796. Miscellaneous Remarks.

him nothing of the great masters of eloquence, except good sense, conclusive reasoning, and the power of moving the passions. Oratorical pomp, a cryptic method, luxurious descriptions presented to the imagination, and a rich variety of rhetorical figures, enter not into his plan. But his thoughts are well digested, and his reasoning conclusive, he produces considerations which not only force the assent, but also touch the conscience; he urges divine authority, by quoting and explaining Scripture, in a form calculated to rouse the soul. He moves the passions, not by little artifices, like the professed rhetorician, but by saying what is much to the purpose, in a plain, serious, and interesting way; and thus making reason, conscience, fear, and love, to be decidedly in his favor. And thus the passions are moved in the most profitable manner; the more generous ones take the lead, and they are ever directed in the way of practical utility.

From what has been said, it is easy to conjecture, that close discussions were peculiarly suited to Mr. Edwards's talents. And as a further evidence to show which way his genius had its prevailing bent, it is observable, that his style improves in proportion to the abstruseness of his subject. Hence, generally speaking, the productions, especially those published by himself, which enter into close, profound, metaphysical distinctions, seem to have as much perspicuity as the nature of the case will admit. To be convinced of the propriety of this remark, the reader need only consult the Treatise on the Will; a work justly thought by able judges to be one of the greatest efforts of the human intellect. Here the author shows such force and strength of mind, such judgment, penetration, and accuracy of thought, as justly entitles him to the character of one of the greatest geniuses of his age. We may add, that this treatise goes further, perhaps, towards settling the main points in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, than any thing that had been written. Herein he has abundantly demonstrated the chief principles on which Arminians build their whole scheme, to be false and most absurd. Whenever, therefore, this book comes to be generally attended to, it will doubtless prove fatal to Arminian and Pelagian principles.

Though the work now mentioned afforded the fairest opportunity for metaphysical investigation, yet the same penetrating turn, the same accuracy of discrimination, and the same closeness of reasoning, distinguish many of his other productions. Among these we might mention, particularly, his book on Original Sin, his Discourse on Justification, his Dissertation on the Nature of true Virtue, and that concerning the End for which God created the World. If the advocates of selfish virtue, and of universal restoration, will do themselves the justice to examine these Dissertations with candor and closeness, they may see cause to be of the author's mind. His other discourses are excellent, including much divinity, and tending above most that are published to awaken the conscience of the sinner, as well as to instruct and quicken the Christian. The sermon (preached at Enfield, 8th July, 1741,) entitled "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," was attended with remarkable impressions on many of the hearers. In his treatise, entitled "An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement, and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion," he shows great acquaintance with Scripture, and a remarkable attention to the prophetic part of it.

Mr. Edwards left a great number of volumes in manuscript, which he

wrote in a miscellaneous way on almost all subjects in divinity. This he did, not with any design that they should ever be published in that form, but for the satisfaction and improvement of his own mind, and that he might retain the thoughts, which appeared to him worth preserving, Some idea of the progress he had made, and the materials he had collected in this way, he gives in his letter to the trustees of the College, when assigning his reasons against accepting the presidentship. He had written much on the prophecies concerning the Messiah, on justification, the divinity of Christ, and the eternity of hell torments. He wrote much on the Bible, in the same way; penning his thoughts on particular passages, as they occurred to him in reading or meditation.

As the method he took to have his miscellaneous writings in good order, so as to be able with ease to turn to any particular subject, is perhaps as good as any, if not the best that has been proposed to the public; some account of it is here given, for the use of young students who have not yet adopted any method, and are disposed to improve their minds by writing. He *numbered* all his miscellaneous writings. The first thing he wrote, is No. 1, the second, No. 2, and so on. And when he had occasion to write on any particular subject, he first set down the number, and then wrote the *subject* in large characters, that it might not escape his eye, when he should have occasion to turn to it. For instance, if he was going to write on the happiness of angels, and his last No. was 148, he would begin thus—149. ANGELS, their happiness. When he wrote what he designed, he would turn to his alphabetical table, and under the letter A, he would write, Angels, their happiness, if this was not there already, and then set down the number 149, close at the right hand of it. And if he had occasion to write any new thoughts on the same subject, if the number of his miscellanies were increased, so that his last number was 261, he would set the number 262, and then the subject as before. And when he had done writing for that time, he turned to his table, to the word angels; and at the right hand of the number 149, set down 262. By this means he had no occasion to leave any chasms, but began his next subject where he left off his last. The number of his miscellaneous writings ranged in this manner, amounts to above 1400. And yet by a table contained in a sheet or two of paper, any thing he wrote can be turned to at pleasure.

A just picture of this eminent servant of God, is given in the following expressive lines, taken from The Triumph of Infidelity, an ingenious satirical poem, ascribed to Dr. Dwight, President of Yale College.

"But, my chief bane, my apostolic foe,
In life, in labors, source of every wo,
From scenes obscure did Heav'n his *Edwards* call,
That moral *Newton*, and that second *Paul*.
He, in clear view, saw sacred systems roll,
Of reasoning worlds, around their central soul;
Saw love attractive every system bind,
The parent linking to each filial mind;
The end of Heaven's high works resistless show'd;
Creating glory, and created good,
And in one little life the gospel more
Disclos'd than all earth's myriads kenn'd before.*

* The reader will consider this proposition as *poetically strong*, but not as *literally accurate*

Beneath his standard, lo! what numbers rise,
To care for truth, and combat for the skies!
Arm'd at all points, they try the battling field.
With reason's sword, and faith's ethereal shield."

The inscription upon the stone which is over the grave of Mr. Edwards in Princeton, composed originally by President Finley, has been very obligingly sent on by a particular friend, and is here gratefully inserted as the close of these Memoirs.

M. S.
Reverendi admodum viri,
JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M. Collegii novæ Cæsariæ
Præsidis.
Natus apud Windsor, Connecticutensium, V Octobris,
A. D. MDCCIII. S. V.
Patre Reverendo Timotheo Edwards oriundus,
Collegio Yalensi educatus,
Apud Northampton Sacris initiatus XV Februarii,
MDCCXXVI—VII.
Illinc dimissus XXII Junii MDCCL,
Et munus Barbaros instituendi accepit,
Præses Aulæ Nassovicæ creatus XVI Februarii MDCCLVIII.
Defunctus in hoc vico XXII Martii sequentis, S. N.
Ætatis LV. heu nimis brevis
His jacit mortalis Pars.
Qualis Persona quæris, Viator?
Vir, Corpore procero, sed gracili,
Studiis intensissimis, Abstinentia, et Sedulitate
Attenuato.
Ingenii Acumine, judicio acri, et Prudentia,
Secundus nemini Mortalium.
Artium liberalium et scientiarum Peritia insignis,
Criticorum sacrorum optimus, Theologus eximius,
Ut vix alter æqualis; disputator candidus.
Fidei Christianæ Propugnator invictus,
Concionator Gravis, Solennis, Discrimians;
Et, Deo favente, Successu
Felicissimus.
Pietate præclarus, moribus suis severus,
Ast aliis æquus et benignus,
Vixit dilectus veneratus—
Sed ah! lugendus
Moriebatur.
Quantos Gemitus discedens ciebat!
Heu Sapientia tanta! heu Doctrina et Religio!
Amissum plorat Collegium, plorat et Ecclesia:
At, eo recepto, gaudet
Cœlum.
Abi, Viator, et pia sequere Vestigia.

A

FAREWELL SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE FIRST PRECINCT IN NORTHAMPTON,

AFTER THE PEOPLE'S PUBLIC REJECTION OF THEIR MINISTER, AND RENOUNCING THEIR RELATION TO HIM AS PASTOR OF THE CHURCH THERE.

JUNE 22, 1750.

PREFACE.

It is not unlikely that some of the readers of the following sermon may be inquisitive concerning the circumstances of the difference between me and the people of Northampton, that issued in that separation between me and them, which occasioned the preaching of this farewell sermon. There is, by no means, room here for a full account of that matter: but yet it seems to be proper, and even necessary, here to correct some gross misrepresentations, which have been abundantly, and (it is to be feared) by some affectedly and industriously made, of that difference: such as, that I insisted on persons being assured of their being in a state of salvation, in order to my admitting them into the church; that I required a particular relation of the method and order of a person's inward experience, and of the time and manner of his conversion, as the test of his fitness for Christian communion; yea, that I have undertaken to set up a pure church, and to make an exact and certain distinction between saints and hypocrites, by a pretended infallible discerning of the state of men's souls; that in these things I had fallen in with those wild people, who have lately appeared in New England, called Separatists; and that I myself was become a grand Separatist; and that I arrogated all the power of judging of the qualifications of candidates for communion wholly to myself, and insisted on acting by my sole authority, in the admission of members into the church, &c.

In opposition to these slanderous representations, I shall at present only give my reader an account of some things which I laid before the council, that separated between me and my people, in order to their having a just and full view of my principles relating to the affair in controversy.

Long before the sitting of the council, my people had sent to the Reverend Mr. Clark of Salem village, desiring him to write in opposition to my principles. Which gave me occasion to write to Mr. Clark, that he might have true information what my principles were. And in the time of the sitting of the council, I did, for their information, make a public declaration of my principles before them and the church, in the meeting-house, of the same import with that in my letter to Mr. Clark, and very much in the same words: and then, afterwards, sent in to the council in writing, an extract of that letter, containing the information I had given to Mr. Clark, in the very words of my letter to him, that the council might read and consider it at their leisure, and have a more certain and satisfactory knowledge what my principles were. The extract which I sent to them was in the following words:

"I am often and I do not know but pretty generally, in the country, represented as of a new and odd opinion with respect to the terms of Christian communion, and as being for introducing a peculiar way of my own. Whereas, I do not perceive that I differ at all from the scheme of Dr. Watts, in his book entitled, *The rational Foundation of a Christian Church, and the Terms of Christian Communion*; which, he says, is the common sentiment of all reformed churches. I had not seen this book of Dr. Watts' when I published what I have written on the subject. But yet, I think my sentiments, as I have expressed them, are as exactly agreeable to what he lays down, as if I had been his pupil. Nor do I at all go beyond what Dr. Doddridge plainly shows to be his sentiments, in his *Rise and Progress of Religion*, and his *Sermons on Regeneration*, and his Paraphrase and Notes on the New Testament. Nor indeed, sir, when I consider the sentiments you have expressed in your letters to Major Pomroy and Mr. Billing, can I perceive but that they come exactly to the same thing that I maintain. You suppose the sacraments are not converting ordinances: but that, *as seals of the covenant, they presuppose conversion, especially in the adult; and that*

it is visible saintship, or, in other words, a credible profession of faith and repentance, a solemn consent to the gospel covenant, joined with a good conversation, and competent measure of Christian knowledge, is what gives a gospel right to all sacred ordinances: but that it is necessary to those that come to these ordinances, and in those that profess a consent to the gospel covenant, that they be sincere in their profession, or at least should think themselves so. The great thing which I have scrupled in the established method of this church's proceeding, and which I dare no longer go on in, is their publicly assenting to the form of words rehearsed on occasion of their admission to the communion, without pretending thereby to mean any such thing as any hearty consent to the terms of the gospel covenant, or to mean any such faith or repentance as belong to the covenant of grace, and are the grand conditions of that covenant: it being, at the same time that the words are used, their known and established principle, which they openly profess and proceed upon, that men may and ought to use these words, and mean no such thing, but something else of a nature far inferior; which I think they have no distinct, determinate notion of; but something consistent with their knowing that they do not chose God as their chief good, but love the world more than him, and that they do not give themselves up entirely to God, but make reserves; and in short, knowing that they do not heartily consent to the gospel covenant, but live still under the reigning power of the love of the world, and enmity to God and Christ. So that the words of their public profession, according to their openly established use, cease to be of the nature of any profession of gospel faith and repentance, or any proper compliance with the covenant: for it is their profession, that the words, as used, mean no such thing. The words used under these circumstances do at least fail of being a credible profession of these things. I can conceive of no such virtue in a certain set of words, that it is proper, merely on the making these sounds, to admit persons to Christian sacraments, without any regard to any pretended meaning of these sounds: nor can I think, that any institution of Christ has established any such terms of admission into the Christian church. It does not belong to the controversy between me and my people, how particular or large the profession should be that is required. I should not choose to be confined to exact limits as to that matter: but rather than contend, I should content myself with a few words, briefly expressing the cardinal virtues or acts implied in a hearty compliance with the covenant, made (as should appear by inquiry into the person's doctrinal knowledge) understandingly; if there were an external conversation agreeable thereto: yea, I should think, that such a person, solemnly making such a profession, had a right to be received as the object of a public charity, however he himself might scruple his own conversion, on account of his not remembering the time, not knowing the method of his conversion, or finding so much remaining sin, &c. And (if his own scruples did not hinder his coming to the Lord's table) I should think the minister or church had no right to debar such a professor, though he should say he did not think himself converted;—for I call that a profession of godliness, which is a profession of the great things wherein godliness consists, and not a profession of his own opinion of his good estate."

Northampton, May 7, 1750.

Thus far my Letter to Mr. Clark.

The council having heard that I had made certain draughts of the covenant, or forms of a public profession of religion which I stood ready to accept of from the candidates for church communion, they, for their further information, sent for them. Accordingly I sent them four distinct draughts or forms, which I had drawn up about a twelvemonth before, as what I stood ready to accept of (any one of them) rather than contend and break with my people.

The two shortest of these forms are here inserted for the satisfaction of the reader. They are as follows.

"I hope I do truly find a heart to give up myself wholly to God, according to the tenor of that covenant of grace which was sealed in my baptism; and to walk in a way of that obedience to all the commandments of God, which the covenant of grace requires, as long as I live." Another,

"I hope I truly find in my heart a willingness to comply with all the commandments of God, which require me to give up myself wholly to him, and to serve him

with my body and my spirit. And do accordingly now promise to walk in a way of obedience to all the commandments of God, as long as I live."

Such kind of professions as these I stood ready to accept, rather than contend and break with my people. Not but that I think it much more convenient, that ordinarily the public profession of religion that is made by Christians, should be much fuller and more particular. And that (as I hinted in my letter to Mr. Clark) I should not choose to be tied up to any certain form of words, but to have liberty to vary the expressions of a public profession the more exactly to suit the sentiments and experience of the professor, that it might be a more just and free expression of what each one finds in his heart.

And moreover it must be noted, that I ever insisted on it, that it belonged to me as a pastor, before a profession was accepted, to have full liberty to instruct the candidate in the meaning of the terms of it, and in the nature of the things proposed to be professed; and to inquire into his doctrinal understanding of these things, according to my best discretion; and to caution the person, as I should think needful, against rashness in making such a profession, or doing it mainly for the credit of himself or his family, or from any secular views whatsoever, and to put him on serious self-examination, and searching his own heart, and prayer to God to search and enlighten him that he may not be hypocritical and deceived in the profession he makes; withal pointing forth to him the many ways in which professors are liable to be deceived.

Nor do I think it improper for a minister in such a case, to inquire and know of the candidate what can be remembered of the circumstances of his Christian experience; as this may tend much to illustrate his profession, and give a minister great advantage for proper instructions: though a particular knowledge and remembrance of the time and method of the first conversion to God, is not to be made the test of a person's sincerity, nor insisted on as necessary in order to his being received into full charity. Not that I think it at all improper or unprofitable, that in some special cases a declaration of the particular circumstances of a person's first awakening and the manner of his convictions, illuminations, and comforts, should be publicly exhibited before the whole congregation, on occasion of his admission into the church; though this be not demanded as necessary to admission. I ever declared against insisting on a relation of experience, in this sense (viz., a relation of the particular time and steps of the operation of the Spirit, in first conversion), as the term of communion: yet, if by a relation of experiences, be meant a declaration of experience of the great things wrought, wherein true grace and the essential acts and habits of holiness consist; in this sense, I think an account of a person's experiences necessary in order to his admission into full communion in the church. But that in whatever inquiries are made, and whatever accounts are given, neither minister nor church are to set up themselves as searchers of hearts, but are to accept the serious, solemn profession of the well instructed professor, of a good life, as best able to determine what he finds in his own heart.

These things may serve in some measure to set right those of my readers who have been misled in their apprehensions of the state of the controversy between me and my people, by the forementioned misrepresentations.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

A FAREWELL SERMON.

2 Corinthians i. 14.—As also you have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The apostle, in the preceding part of the chapter, declares what great troubles he met with in the course of his ministry. In the text and two foregoing verses, he declares what were his comforts and supports under the troubles he met with. There are four things in particular.

1. That he had approved himself to his own conscience, ver. 12: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."

2. Another thing he speaks of as matter of comfort, is, that as he had approved himself to his own conscience, so he had also to the consciences of his hearers, the Corinthians, whom he now wrote to, and that they should approve of him at the day of judgment.

3. The hope he had of seeing the blessed fruit of his labors and sufferings in the ministry, in their happiness and glory, in that great day of acccounts.

4. That, in his ministry among the Corinthians, he had approved himself to his Judge, who would approve and reward his faithfulness in that day.

These three last particulars are signified in my text, and the preceding verse; and, indeed, all the four are implied in the text: it is implied that the Corinthians had acknowledged him as their spiritual father, and as one that had been faithful among them, and as the means of their future joy and glory at the day of judgment, and one whom they should then see, and have a joyful meeting with as such. It is implied, that the apostle expected at that time to have a joyful meeting with them before the Judge, and with joy to behold their glory, as the fruit of his labors; and so they would be his rejoicing. It is implied also that he then expected to be approved of the great Judge, when he and they should meet together before him; and that he would then acknowledge his fidelity, and that this had been the means of their glory; and that thus he would, as it were, give them to him as his crown of rejoicing. But this the apostle could not hope for, unless he had the testimony of his own conscience in his favor. And therefore the words do imply, in the strongest manner, that he had approved himself to his own conscience.

There is one thing implied in each of these particulars, and in every part of the text, which is that point I shall make the subject of my present discourse, viz.

DOCTRINE.

Ministers, and the people that are under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal at the day of judgment.

Ministers, and the people that have been under their care, must be parted in this world, how well soever they have been united: if they are not separated before, they must be parted by death; and they may be separated while life is continued. We live in a world of change, where nothing is certain or

stable; and where a little time, a few revolutions of the sun, bring to pass strange things, surprising alterations, in particular persons, in families, in towns and churches, in countries and nations. It often happens, that those who seem most united, in a little time are most disunited, and at the greatest distance. Thus ministers and people, between whom there has been the greatest mutual regard, and strictest union, may not only differ in their judgments, and be alienated in affection, but one may rend from the other, and all relation between them be dissolved; the minister may be removed to a distant place, and they may never have any more to do with one another in this world. But if it be so, there is one meeting more that they must have, and that is in the last great day of accounts.

Here I would show,

1. In what manner ministers, and the people who have been under their care, shall meet one another at the day of judgment.

2. For what purposes.

3. For what reasons God has so ordered it, that ministers and their people shall then meet together in such a manner, and for such purposes.

I. I would show, in some particulars, in what manner ministers, and the people who have been under their care, shall meet one another at the day of judgment. Concerning this I would observe two things in general.

1. That they shall not then meet only as all mankind must then meet, but there will be something peculiar in the manner of their meeting.

2. That their meeting together at that time shall be very different from what used to be in the house of God in this world.

1. They shall not meet at that day as all the world must then meet together. I would observe a difference in two things.

(1.) As to a clear actual view, and distinct knowledge and notice of each other.

Although the whole world will be then present, all mankind of all generations gathered in one vast assembly, with all of the angelic nature, both elect and fallen angels; yet we need not suppose that every one will have a distinct and particular knowledge of each individual of the whole assembled multitude, which will undoubtedly consist of many millions of millions. Though it is probable that men's capacities will be much greater than in the present state, yet they will not be infinite; though their understanding and comprehension will be vastly extended, yet men will not be deified. There will probably be a very enlarged view that particular persons will have of various parts and members of that vast assembly, and so of the proceedings of that great day; but yet it must needs be, that according to the nature of finite minds, some persons and some things, at that day, shall fall more under the notice of particular persons than others; and this (as we may well suppose) according as they shall have a nearer concern with some than others, in the transactions of the day. There will be special reason why those who have had special concerns together in this world, in their state of probation, and whose mutual affairs will be then to be tried and judged, should especially be set in one another's view. Thus we may suppose, that rulers and subjects, earthly judges and those whom they have judged, neighbors who have had mutual converse, dealings, and contests, heads of families and their children and servants, shall then meet, and in a peculiar distinction be set together And especially will it be thus with ministers and their people. It is evident by the text, that these shall be in each other's view, shall distinctly know each other, and shall have particular notice one of another at that time.

(2.) They shall meet together, as having a special concern one with another in the great transactions of that day.

Although they shall meet the whole world at that time, yet they will not have any immediate and particular concern with all. Yea, the far greater part of those who shall then be gathered together, will be such as they have had no intercourse with in their state of probation, and so will have no mutual concerns to be judged of. But as to ministers, and the people that have been under their care, they will be such as have had much immediate concern one with another, in matters of the greatest moment, that ever mankind have to do one with another in. Therefore they especially must meet and be brought together before the judge, as having special concern one with another in the design and business of that great day of accounts.

Thus their meeting, as to the manner of it, will be diverse from the meeting of mankind in general.

2. Their meeting at the day of judgment will be very diverse from their meetings one with another in this world.

Ministers and their people, while their relation continues, often meet together in this world: they are wont to meet from Sabbath to Sabbath, and at other times for the public worship of God, and administration of ordinances, and the solemn services of God's house: and besides these meetings, they have also occasions to meet for the determining and managing their ecclesiastical affairs, for the exercise of church discipline, and the settling and adjusting those things which concern the purity and good order of public administrations. But their meeting at the day of judgment will be exceeding diverse, in its manner and circumstance, from any such meetings and interviews as they have, one with another in the present state. I would observe how, in a few particulars.

(1.) Now they meet together in a preparatory mutable state, but then in an unchangeable state.

Now sinners in the congregation meet their minister in a state wherein they are capable of a saving change, capable of being turned, through God's blessing on the ministrations and labors of their pastor, from the power of Satan unto God; and being brought out of a state of guilt, condemnation and wrath, to a state of peace and favor with God, to the enjoyment of the privileges of his children, and a title to their eternal inheritance. And saints now meet their minister with great remains of corruption, and sometimes under great spiritual difficulties and affliction: and therefore are yet the proper subjects of means of a happy alteration of their state, consisting in a greater freedom from these things, which they have reason to hope for in the way of an attendance on ordinances, and of which God is pleased commonly to make his ministers the instruments. And ministers and their people now meet in order to the bringing to pass such happy changes; they are the great benefits sought in their solemn meetings in this world.

But when they shall meet together at the day of judgment, it will be far otherwise. They will not then meet in order to the use of means for the bringing to effect any such changes; for they will all meet in an unchangeable state. Sinners will be in an unchangeable state: they who then shall be under the guilt and power of sin, and have the wrath of God abiding on them, shall be beyond all remedy or possibility of change, and shall meet their ministers without any hopes of relief or remedy, or getting any good by their means. And as for the saints, they will be already perfectly delivered from all their before remaining corruption, temptation, and calamities of every kind, and set forever out of their reach; and no deliverance, no happy alteration, will remain to be

accomplished in the way of the use of means of grace, under the administrations of ministers. It will then be pronounced, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

(2.) Then they shall meet together in a state of clear, certain and infallible light.

Ministers are set as guides and teachers, and are represented in Scripture as lights set up in the churches; and in the present state meet their people from time to time in order to instruct and enlighten them, to correct their mistakes, and to be a voice behind them, when they turn aside to the right hand or to the left, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it;" to evince and confirm the truth by exhibiting the proper evidences of it, and to refute errors and corrupt opinions, to convince the erroneous and establish the doubting. But when Christ shall come to judgment, every error and false opinion shall be detected; all deceit and illusion shall vanish away before the light of that day, as the darkness of the night vanishes at the appearance of the rising sun; and every doctrine of the word of God shall then appear in full evidence, and none shall remain unconvinced; all shall know the truth with the greatest certainty, and there shall be no mistakes to rectify.

Now ministers and their people may disagree in their judgments concerning some matters of religion, and may sometimes meet to confer together concerning those things wherein they differ, and to hear the reasons that may be offered on one side and the other; and all may be ineffectual as to any conviction of the truth: they may meet and part again, no more agreed than before; and that side which was in the wrong, may remain so still; sometimes the meetings of ministers with their people in such a case of disagreeing sentiments, are attended with unhappy debate and controversy, managed with much prejudice and want of candor; not tending to light and conviction, but rather to confirm and increase darkness, and establish opposition to the truth, and alienation of affection one from another. But when they shall hereafter meet together, at the day of judgment, before the tribunal of the great Judge, the mind and will of Christ will be made known; and there shall no longer be any debate or difference of opinions; the evidence of the truth shall appear beyond all dispute, and all controversies shall be finally and forever decided.

Now ministers meet their people, in order to enlighten and awaken the consciences of sinners: setting before them the great evil and danger of sin, the strictness of God's law, their own wickedness of heart and practice, the great guilt they are under, the wrath that abides upon them, and their impotence, blindness, poverty, and helpless and undone condition: but all is often in vain; they remain still, notwithstanding all their ministers can say, stupid and unawakened, and their consciences unconvinced. But it will not be so at their last meeting at the day of judgment; sinners, when they shall meet their minister before their great Judge, will not meet him with a stupid conscience: they will then be fully convinced of the truth of those things which they formerly heard from him, concerning the greatness and terrible majesty of God, his holiness, and hatred of sin, and his awful justice in punishing it, the strictness of his law, and the dreadfulness and truth of his threatenings, and their own unspeakable guilt and misery: and they shall never more be insensible of these things: the eyes of conscience will now be fully enlightened, and never shall be blinded again: the mouth of conscience shall now be opened, and never shall be shut any more

Now ministers meet with their people, in public and private, in order to

enlighten them concerning the state of their souls; to open and apply the rules of God's word to them, in order to their searching their own hearts, and discerning the state that they are in; but now ministers have no infallible discerning of the state of the souls of their people; and the most skilful of them are liable to mistakes, and often are mistaken in things of this nature; nor are the people able certainly to know the state of their minister, or one another's state; very often those pass among them for saints, and it may be eminent saints, that are grand hypocrites; and on the other hand, those are sometimes censured, or hardly received into their charity, that are indeed some of God's jewels. And nothing is more common than for men to be mistaken concerning their own state: many that are abominable to God, and the children of his wrath, think highly of themselves, as his precious saints and dear children. Yea, there is reason to think, that often some that are most bold in their confidence of their safe and happy state, and think themselves not only true saints, but the most eminent saints in the congregation, are in a peculiar manner a smoke in God's nose. And thus it undoubtedly often is in those congregations where the word of God is most faithfully dispensed, notwithstanding all that ministers can say in their clearest explications, and most searching applications of the doctrines and rules of God's word to the souls of their hearers, in their meetings one with another. But in the day of judgment they shall have another sort of meeting; then the secrets of every heart shall be made manifest, and every man's state shall be perfectly known: 1 Cor. iv. 5, "Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." Then none shall be deceived concerning his own state, nor shall be any more in doubt about it. There shall be an eternal end to all the ill conceit and vain hopes of deluded hypocrites, and all the doubts and fears of sincere Christians. And then shall all know the state of one another's souls: the people shall know whether their minister has been sincere and faithful, and the ministers shall know the state of every one of their people, and to whom the word and ordinances of God have been a savor of life unto life, and to whom a savor of death unto death.

Now in this present state it often happens that when ministers and people meet together to debate and manage their ecclesiastical affairs, especially in a state of controversy, they are ready to judge and censure one another with regard to each other's views and designs, and the principles and ends that each is influenced by; and are greatly mistaken in their judgment, and wrong one another with regard to each other's views and designs and the principles and ends that each is influenced by, and are greatly mistaken in their judgment, and wrong one another in their censures. But at that future meeting, things will be set in a true and perfect light, and the principles and aims that every one has acted from shall be certainly known; and there will be an end to all errors of this kind, and all unrighteous censures.

(3.) In this world, ministers and their people often meet together to hear of and wait upon an unseen Lord; but at the day of judgment, they shall meet in his most immediate and visible presence.

Ministers, who now often meet their people to preach to them the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, to convince them that there is a God, and declare to them what manner of being he is, and to convince them that he governs, and will judge the world, and that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, and to preach to them a Christ in heaven, and at the right hand of God, in an unseen world, shall then meet their people in the most im-

mediate sensible presence of this great God, Saviour, and Judge, appearing in the most plain, visible, and open manner, with great glory, with all his holy angels, before them and the whole world. They shall not meet them to hear about an absent Christ, an unseen Lord, and future Judge; but to appear before that Judge, and as being set together in the presence of that supreme Lord, in his immense glory and awful majesty, whom they have heard so often of in their meetings together on earth.

(4.) The meeting at the last day, of ministers, and the people that have been under their care, will not be attended by any one with a careless, heedless heart.

With such a heart are their meetings often attended in this world by many persons, having little regard to him whom they pretend unitedly to adore in the solemn duties of his public worship, taking little heed to their own thoughts or frame of their minds, not attending to the business they are engaged in, or considering the end for which they are come together. But the meeting at that great day will be very different: there will not be one careless heart, no sleeping, no wandering of mind from the great concern of the meeting, no inattentiveness to the business of the day, no regardlessness of the presence they are in, or of those great things which they shall hear from Christ at that meeting, or that they formerly heard from him, and of him, by their ministers, in their meeting in a state of trial, or which they shall now hear their ministers declaring concerning them before their judge.

Having observed these things, concerning the manner and circumstances of this future meeting of ministers and the people that have been under their care, before the tribunal of Christ at the day of judgment, I now proceed,

II. To observe to what purposes they shall then meet.

1. To give an account before the great Judge, of their behavior one to another, in the relation they stood in to each other in this world.

Ministers are sent forth by Christ to their people on his business, are his servants and messengers; and, when they have finished their service, they must return to their master to give him an account of what they have done, and of the entertainment they have had in performing their ministry. Thus we find, in Luke xiv. 16—21, that when the servant who was sent forth to call the guests to the great supper, had done his errand, and finished his appointed service, he returned to his master, and gave him an account of what he had done, and of the entertainment he had received. And when the master, being angry, sent his servant to others, he returns again, and gives his master an account of his conduct and success. So we read, in Heb. xiii. 17, of ministers being rulers in the house of God, "that watch for souls, as those that must give account." And we see by the forementioned Luke xiv., that ministers must give an account to their master, not only of their own behavior in the discharge of their office, but also of their peoples' reception of them, and of the treatment they have met with among them.

And therefore, as they will be called to give an account of both, they shall give an account at the great day of accounts in the presence of their people; they and their people being both present before their Judge.

Faithful ministers will then give an account with joy, concerning those who have received them well, and made a good improvement of their ministry; and these will be given them, at that day, as their crown of rejoicing. And, at the same time, they will give an account of the ill treatment of such as have not well received them and their messages from Christ: they will meet these, not as they used to do in this world, to counsel and warn them, but to bear witness against them; and as their judges, and assessors with Christ, to condemn them.

And, on the other hand, the people will, at that day, rise up in judgment against wicked and unfaithful ministers, who have sought their own temporal interest more than the good of the souls of their flock.

2. At that time ministers, and the people who have been under their care, shall meet together before Christ, that he may judge between them, as to any controversies which have subsisted between them in this world.

So it very often comes to pass in this evil world, that great differences and controversies arise between ministers and the people that are under their pastoral care. Though they are under the greatest obligations to live in peace, above persons in almost any relation whatever; and although contests and dissensions between persons so related are the most unhappy and terrible in their consequences, on many accounts, of any sort of contentions; yet how frequent have such contentions been! Sometimes a people contest with their ministers, about their doctrine, sometimes about their administrations and conduct, and sometimes about their maintenance; and sometimes such contests continue a long time; and sometimes they are decided in this world, according to the prevailing interest of one party or the other, rather than by the word of God, and the reason of things; and sometimes such controversies never have any proper determination in this world.

But at the day of judgment there will be a full, perfect, and everlasting decision of them. The infallible Judge, the infinite fountain of light, truth and justice, will judge between the contending parties, and will declare what is the truth, who is in the right, and what is agreeable to his mind and will. And in order hereto the parties must stand together before him at the last day; which will be the great day of finishing and determining all controversies, rectifying all mistakes, and abolishing all unrighteous judgments, errors, and confusions, which have before subsisted in the world of mankind.

3. Ministers, and the people that have been under their care, must meet together at that time to receive an eternal sentence and retribution from the judge, in the presence of each other, according to their behavior in the relation they stood in one to another, in the present state.

The Judge will not only declare justice, but he will do justice between ministers and their people. He will declare what is right between them, approving him that has been just and faithful, and condemning the unjust; and perfect truth and equity shall take place in the sentence which he passes, in the rewards he bestows, and the punishments which he inflicts. There shall be a glorious reward to faithful ministers; to those who have been successful. Dan. xii. 3, "And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever:" and also to those who have been faithful, and yet not successful, Isa. xlix. 4: "Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nought; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my reward with my God." And those who have well received and entertained them shall be gloriously rewarded: Matt. x. 40, 41, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." Such people, and their faithful ministers, shall be each other's crown of rejoicing. 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." And in the text, *we are your rejoicing, as ye also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus* But they that evil entreat Christ's faithful ministers, especially in

that wherein they are faithful, shall be severely punished: Matt. x. 14, 15, "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city." Deut. xxxiii. 8—11, "And of Levi he said, Let thy Urim and thy Thummim be with thy holy one. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law. Bless, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands, smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again." On the other hand, those ministers who are found to have been unfaithful, shall have a most terrible punishment. See Ezek. xxxiii. 6, Matt. xxiii. 1—33.

Thus justice shall be administered at the great day to ministers and their people: and to that end they shall meet together, that they may not only receive justice to themselves, but see justice done to the other party: for this is the end of that great day, to reveal or declare the righteous judgment of God; Rom. ii. 5. Ministers shall have justice done them, and they shall see justice done to their people: and the people shall receive justice and see justice done to their minister. And so all things will be adjusted and settled forever between them; every one being sentenced and recompensed according to his works, either in receiving and wearing a crown of eternal joy and glory, or in suffering everlasting shame and pain.

I come now to the next thing proposed, viz.,

III. To give some reasons why we may suppose God has so ordered it, that ministers and the people that have been under their care, shall meet together at the day of judgment, in such a manner and for such purposes.

There are two things which I would now observe:

1. The mutual concerns of ministers and their people are of the greatest importance.

The Scripture declares, that God will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. It is fit that all the concerns, and all the behavior of mankind, both public and private, should be brought at last before God's tribunal, and finally determined by an infallible Judge: but it is especially requisite that it should be thus, as to affairs of very great importance.

Now the mutual concerns of a Christian minister and his church and congregation, are of the vastest importance: in many respects, of much greater moment than the temporal concerns of the greatest earthly monarchs, and their kingdoms or empires. It is of vast consequence how ministers discharge their office, and conduct themselves towards their people in the work of the ministry, and in affairs appertaining to it. It is also a matter of vast importance, how a people receive and entertain a faithful minister of Christ, and what improvement they make of his ministry. These things have a more immediate and direct respect to the great and last end for which man was made, and the eternal welfare of mankind, than any of the temporal concerns of men, whether public or private. And therefore it is especially fit that these affairs should be brought into judgment and openly determined and settled in truth and righteousness; and that to this end, ministers and their people should meet together before the omniscient and infallible judge.

2. The mutual concerns of ministers and their people have a special relation to the main things appertaining to the day of judgment.

They have a special relation to that great and divine person who will then appear as Judge. Ministers are his messengers, sent forth by him; and, in their

office and administrations among their people, represent his person, stand in his stead, as those that are sent to declare his mind, to do his work, and to speak and act in his name. And therefore it is especially fit that they should return to him to give an account of their work and success. The king is judge of all his subjects, they are all accountable to him. But it is more especially requisite that the king's ministers, who are especially intrusted with the administrations of his kingdom, and that are sent forth on some special negotiation, should return to him, to give an account of themselves, and their discharge of their trust, and the reception they have met with.

Ministers are not only messengers of the person who at the last day will appear as Judge, but the errand they are sent upon, and the affairs they have committed to them as his ministers, do most immediately concern his honor, and the interest of his kingdom. The work they are sent upon is to promote the designs of his administration and government; and therefore their business with their people has a near relation to the day of judgment; for the great end of that day is completely to settle and establish the affairs of his kingdom, to adjust all things that pertain to it, that every thing that is opposite to the interests of his kingdom may be removed, and that every thing which contributes to the completeness and glory of it may be perfected and confirmed, that this great King may receive his due honor and glory.

Again, the mutual concerns of ministers and their people have a direct relation to the concerns of the day of judgment, as the business of ministers with their people is to promote the eternal salvation of the souls of men, and their escape from eternal damnation; and the day of judgment is the day appointed for that end, openly to decide and settle men's eternal state, to fix some in a state of eternal salvation, and to bring their salvation to its utmost consummation, and to fix others in a state of everlasting damnation and most perfect misery. The mutual concerns of ministers and people have a most direct relation to the day of judgment, as the very design of the work of the ministry is the people's preparation for that day. Ministers are sent to warn them of the approach of that day, to forewarn them of the dreadful sentence then to be pronounced on the wicked, and declare to them the blessed sentence then to be pronounced on the righteous, and to use means with them that they may escape the wrath which is then to come on the ungodly, and obtain the reward then to be bestowed on the saints.

And as the mutual concerns of ministers and their people have so near and direct a relation to that day, it is especially fit that those concerns should be brought in to that day, and there settled and issued; and that in order to this, ministers and their people should meet and appear together before the great Judge at that day.

APPLICATION.

The improvement I would make of the things which have been observed, is to lead the people here present who have been under my pastoral care, to some reflections, and give them some advice suitable to our present circumstances; relating to what has been lately done in order to our being separated, as to the relation we have heretofore stood in one to another; but expecting to meet each other before the great tribunal at the day of judgment.

The deep and serious consideration of that our future most solemn meeting, is certainly most suitable at such a time as this; there having so lately been that done, which, in all probability, will (as to the relation we have heretofore stood in) be followed with an everlasting separation.

How often have we met together in the house of God in this relation! How often have I spoke to you, instructed, counselled, warned, directed, and fed you, and administered ordinances among you, as the people which were committed to my care, and whose precious souls I had the charge of! But in all probability this never will be again.

The prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxv. 3, puts the people in mind how long he had labored among them in the work of the ministry: "From the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day (that is, the three and twentieth year), the word of the Lord came unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking." I am not about to compare myself with the prophet Jeremiah; but in this respect I can say as he did, that "I have spoken the word of God to you, unto the three and twentieth year, rising early and speaking." It was three and twenty years, the 15th day of last February, since I have labored in the work of the ministry, in the relation of a pastor to this church and congregation. And though my strength has been weakness, having always labored under great infirmity of body, besides my insufficiency for so great a charge in other respects, yet I have not spared my feeble strength, but have exerted it for the good of your souls. I can appeal to you as the apostle does to his hearers, Gal. iv. 13, "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you." I have spent the prime of my life and strength in labors for your eternal welfare. You are my witnesses, that what strength I have had I have not neglected in idleness, nor laid out in prosecuting worldly schemes, and managing temporal affairs, for the advancement of my outward estate, and aggrandizing myself and family; but have given myself wholly to the work of the ministry, laboring in it night and day, rising early and applying myself to this great business to which Christ appointed me. I have found the work of the ministry among you to be a great work indeed, a work of exceeding care, labor and difficulty: many have been the heavy burdens that I have borne in it, which my strength has been very unequal to. God called me to bear these burdens; and I bless his name, that he has so supported me as to keep me from sinking under them, and that his power herein has been manifested in my weakness; so that although I have often been troubled on every side, yet I have not been distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed.

But now I have reason to think my work is finished which I had to do as your minister: you have publicly rejected me, and my opportunities cease.

How highly therefore does it now become us to consider of that time when we must meet one another before the chief Shepherd? When I must give an account of my stewardship, of the service I have done for, and the reception and treatment I have had among the people he sent me to: and you must give an account of your own conduct towards me, and the improvement you have made of these three and twenty years of my ministry. For then both you and I must appear together, and we both must give an account, in order to an infallible, righteous and eternal sentence to be passed upon us, by him who will judge us with respect to all that we have said or done in our meeting here, all our conduct one towards another, in the house of God, and elsewhere, on Sabbath days, and on other days; who will try our hearts and manifest our thoughts, and the principles and frames of our minds, will judge us with respect to all the controversies which have subsisted between us, with the strictest impartiality, and will examine our treatment of each other in those controversies: there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid which shall not be known; all will be examined in the searching, penetrating light of God's omniscience

and glory, and by him whose eyes are as a flame of fire; and truth and right shall be made plainly to appear, being stripped of every veil; and all error, falsehood, unrighteousness, and injury shall be laid open, stripped of every disguise; every specious pretence, every cavil, and all false reasoning shall vanish in a moment, as not being able to bear the light of that day. And then our hearts will be turned inside out, and the secrets of them will be made more plainly to appear than our outward actions do now Then it shall appear what the ends are which we have aimed at, what have been the governing principles which we have acted from, and what have been the dispositions we have exercised in our ecclesiastical disputes and contests. Then it will appear whether I acted uprightly, and from a truly conscientious, careful regard to my duty to my great Lord and Master, in some former ecclesiastical controversies, which have been attended with exceeding unhappy circumstances and consequences: it will appear whether there was any just cause for the resentment which was manifested on those occasions. And then our late grand controversy, concerning the qualifications necessary for admission to the privileges of members, in complete standing, in the visible church of Christ, will be examined and judged in all its parts and circumstances, and the whole set forth in a clear, certain, and perfect light. Then it will appear whether the doctrine which I have preached and published concerning this matter be Christ's own doctrine, whether he will not own it as one of the precious truths which have proceeded from his own mouth, and vindicate and honor as such before the whole universe. Then it will appear what is meant by "the man that comes without the wedding garment;" for that is the day spoken of, Matt. xxii. 13, "wherein such a one shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And then it will appear whether, in declaring this doctrine, and acting agreeable to it, and in my general conduct in the affair, I have been influenced from any regard to my own temporal interest or honor, or desire to appear wiser than others; or have acted from any sinister, secular views whatsoever; and whether what I have done has not been from a careful, strict, and tender regard to the will of my Lord and Master, and because I dare not offend him, being satisfied what his will was, after a long, diligent, impartial, and prayerful inquiry; having this constantly in view and prospect, to engage me to great solicitude not rashly to determine truth to be on this side of the question, where I am now persuaded it is, that such a determination would not be for my temporal interest, but every way against it, bringing a long series of extreme difficulties, and plunging me into an abyss of trouble and sorrow. And then it will appear whether my people have done their duty to their pastor with respect to this matter; whether they have shown a right temper and spirit on this occasion; whether they have done me justice in hearing, attending to and considering what I had to say in evidence of what I believed and taught as part of the counsel of God; whether I have been treated with that impartiality, candor, and regard which the just Judge esteemed due; and whether, in the many steps which have been taken, and the many things that have been said and done in the course of this controversy, righteousness and charity, and Christian decorum have been maintained; or, if otherwise, to how great a degree these things have been violated. Then every step of the conduct of each of us in this affair, from first to last, and the spirit we have exercised in all shall be examined and manifested, and our own consciences shall speak plain and loud, and each of us shall be convinced, and the world shall know; and never shall there be any more mistake, misrepresentation, or misapprehension of the affair to eternity.

This controversy is now probably brought to an issue between you and me as to this world; it has issued in the event of the week before last: but it must have another decision at that great day, which certainly will come, when you and I shall meet together before the great judgment seat: and therefore I leave it to that time, and shall say no more about it at present.

But I would now proceed to address myself particularly to several sorts of persons.

1. To those who are professors of godliness amongst us.

I would now call you to a serious consideration of that great day wherein you must meet him who has heretofore been your pastor, before the Judge whose eyes are as a flame of fire.

I have endeavored according to my best ability, to search the word of God, with regard to the distinguishing notes of true piety, those by which persons might best discover their state, and most surely and clearly judge of themselves. And these rules and marks I have from time to time applied to you, in the preaching of the word to the utmost of my skill, and in the most plain and searching manner that I have been able, in order to the detecting the deceived hypocrite, and establishing the hopes and comforts of the sincere. And yet it is to be feared, that after all that I have done, I now leave some of you in a deceived, deluded state; for it is not to be supposed that among several hundred professors, none are deceived.

Henceforward I am like to have no more opportunity to take the care and charge of your souls, to examine and search them. But still I entreat you to remember and consider the rules which I have often laid down to you during my ministry, with a solemn regard to the future day when you and I must meet together before our Judge; when the uses of examination you have heard from me must be rehearsed again before you, and those rules of trial must be tried, and it will appear whether they have been good or not; and it will also appear whether you have impartially heard them, and tried yourselves by them; and the Judge himself, who is infallible, will try both you and me: and after this none will be deceived concerning the state of their souls.

I have often put you in mind, that whatever your pretences to experiences, discoveries, comforts, and joys have been, at that day every one will be judged according to his works; and then you will find it so.

May you have a minister, of greater knowledge of the word of God, and better acquaintance with soul cases, and of greater skill in applying himself to souls, whose discourses may be more searching and convincing; that such of you as have held fast deceit under my preaching, may have your eyes opened by his; that you may be undeceived before that great day.

What means and helps for instruction and self-examination you may hereafter have is uncertain; but one thing is certain, that the time is short, your opportunity for rectifying mistakes in so important a concern will soon come to an end. We live in a world of great changes. There is now a great change come to pass; a controversy is at an end which you have continued for so many years: but the time is coming, and will soon come, when you will pass out of time into eternity; and so will pass from under all means of grace whatsoever.

The greater part of you who are professors of godliness have (to use the phrase of the apostle) "acknowledged me, in part:" you have heretofore acknowledged me to be your spiritual father, the instrument of the greatest good to you that ever is, or can be obtained by any of the children of men. Consider of that day when you and I shall meet before our Judge, when it shall be examined whether you have had from me the treatment which is due to

spiritual children, and whether you have treated me as you ought to have treated a spiritual father. As the relation of a natural parent brings great obligations on children in the sight of God; so much more, in many respects, does the relation of a spiritual father bring great obligations on such whose conversation and eternal salvation they suppose God has made them the instruments of: 1 Cor. iv. 15, "For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel."

II. Now I am taking my leave of this people I would apply myself to such among them as I leave in a Christless, graceless condition; and would call on such seriously to consider of that solemn day when they and I must meet before the Judge of the world.

My parting with you is in some respects in a peculiar manner a melancholy parting; inasmuch as I leave you in most melancholy circumstances; because I leave you in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, having the wrath of God abiding on you, and remaining under condemnation to everlasting misery and destruction. Seeing I must leave you, it would have been a comfortable and happy circumstance of our parting, if I had left you in Christ, safe and blessed in that sure refuge and glorious rest of the saints. But it is otherwise. I leave you far off, aliens and strangers, wretched subjects and captives of sin and Satan, and prisoners of vindictive justice; without Christ, and without God in the world.

Your consciences bear me witness, that while I had opportunity, I have not ceased to warn you, and set before you your danger. I have studied to represent the misery and necessity of your circumstances in the clearest manner possible. I have tried all ways that I could think of tending to awaken your consciences, and make you sensible of the necessity of your improving your time, and being speedy in flying from the wrath to come, and thorough in the use of means for your escape and safety. I have diligently endeavored to find out and use the most powerful motives to persuade you to take care for your own welfare and salvation. I have not only endeavored to awaken you, that you might be moved with fear, but I have used my utmost endeavors to win you: I have sought out acceptable words, that if possible I might prevail upon you to forsake sin, and turn to God, and accept of Christ as your Saviour and Lord. I have spent my strength very much in these things. But yet, with regard to you whom I am now speaking to, I have not been successful; but have this day reason to complain in those words, Jer. vi. 29: "The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away." It is to be feared that all my labors, as to many of you, have served no other purpose but to harden you; and that the word which I have preached, instead of being a savor of life unto life, has been a savor of death unto death. Though I shall not have any account to give for the future of such as have openly and resolutely renounced my ministry, as of a betrustment committed to me: yet remember you must give account for yourselves, of your care of your own souls, and your improvement of all means past and future, through your whole lives. God only knows what will become of your poor perishing souls, what means you may hereafter enjoy, or what disadvantages and temptations you may be under. May God in his mercy grant, that however all past means have been unsuccessful, you may have future means which may have a new effect; and that the word of God, as it shall be hereafter dispensed to you, may prove as the fire and the hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. However, let me now at parting exhort and beseech you not wholly to forget the warnings you have had while under my ministry. When

you and I shall meet at the day of judgment, then you will rememoer them; the sight of me, your former minister, on that occasion, will soon revive them in your memory; and that in a very affecting manner. O do not let that be the first time that they are so revived!

You and I are now parting one from another as to this world; let us labor that we may not be parted after our meeting at the last day. If I have been your faithful pastor (which will that day appear whether I have or no), then I shall be acquitted, and shall ascend with Christ. O do your part, that in such a case, it may not be so, that you should be forced eternally to part from me, and all that have been faithful in Christ Jesus. This is a sorrowful parting that now is between you and me, but that would be a more sorrowful parting to you than this. This you may perhaps bear without being much affected with it, if you are not glad of it; but such a parting in that day will most deeply, sensibly, and dreadfully affect you.

III. I would address myself to those who are under some awakenings.

Blessed be God that there are some such, and that (although I have reason to fear I leave multitudes in this large congregation in a Christless state) yet I do not leave them all in total stupidity and carelessness about their souls. Some of you, that I have reason to hope are under some awakenings, have acquainted me with your circumstances; which has a tendency to cause me, now I am leaving you, to take my leave of you with peculiar concern for you. What will be the issue of your present exercise of mind I know not: but it will be known at that day, when you and I shall meet before the judgment seat of Christ. Therefore now be much in consideration of that day.

Now I am parting with this flock, I would once more press upon you the counsels I have heretofore given, to take heed of being slighty in so great a concern, to be thorough and in good earnest in the affair, and to beware of backsliding, to hold on and hold out to the end. And cry mightily to God, that these great changes that pass over this church and congregation do not prove your overthrow. There is great temptation in them; and the devil will undoubtedly seek to make his advantage of them, if possible to cause your present convictions and endeavors to be abortive. You had need to double your diligence, and watch and pray, lest you be overcome by temptation.

Whoever may hereafter stand related to you as your spiritual guide, my desire and prayer is, that the great Shepherd of the sheep would have a special respect to you, and be your guide (for there is none teacheth like him), and that he who is the infinite fountain of light, would "open your eyes, and turn you from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that you may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in Christ;" that so, in that great day, when I shall meet you again before your Judge and mine, we may meet in joyful and glorious circumstances, never to be separated any more.

IV. I would apply myself to the young people of the congregation.

Since I have been settled in the work of the ministry in this place, I have ever had a peculiar concern for the souls of the young people, and a desire that religion might flourish among them: and have especially exerted myself in order to it; because I knew the special opportunity they had beyond others, and that ordinarily those whom God intended mercy for, were brought to fear and love him in their youth. And it has ever appeared to me a peculiarly amiable thing, to see young people walking in the ways of virtue and Christian piety, having their hearts purified and sweetened with a principle of divine love And it has appeared a thing exceeding beautiful, and what would be much to

the adorning and happiness of the town, if the young people could be persuaded when they meet together, to converse as Christians, and as the children of God; avoiding impurity, levity and extravagance; keeping strictly to the rules of virtue, and conversing together of the things of God, and Christ, and heaven. This is what I have longed for: and it has been exceeding grievous to me when I have heard of vice, vanity and disorder among our youth. And so far as I know my own heart, it was from hence that I formerly led this church to some measures, for the suppressing vice among our young people, which gave so great offence, and by which I became so obnoxious. I have sought the good, and not the hurt of our young people. I have desired their truest honor and happiness, and not their reproach; knowing that true virtue and religion tended not only to the glory and felicity of young people in another world, but their greatest peace and prosperity, and highest dignity and honor in this world; and above all things to sweeten, and render pleasant and delightful, even the days of youth.

But whether I have loved you, and sought your good more or less, yet God in his providence, now calling me to part with you, committing your souls to him who once committed the pastoral care of them to me, nothing remains, but only (as I am now taking my leave of you) earnestly to beseech you, from love to yourselves, if you have none to me, not to despise and forget the warnings and counsels I have so often given you; remembering the day when you and I must meet again before the great Judge of quick and dead; when it will appear whether the things I have taught you were true, whether the counsels I have given you were good, and whether I truly sought your good, and whether you have well improved my endeavors.

I have, from time to time, earnestly warned you against frolicking (as it is called), and some other liberties commonly taken by young people in the land. And whatever some may say in justification of such liberties and customs, and may laugh at warnings against them, I now leave you my parting testimony against such things; not doubting but God will approve and confirm it in that day when we shall meet before him.

V. I would apply myself to the children of the congregation, the lambs of this flock, who have been so long under my care.

I have just now said that I have had a peculiar concern for the young people; and in so saying I did not intend to exclude you. You are in youth, and in the most early youth: and therefore I have been sensible that if those that were young had a precious opportunity for their souls' good, you who are very young had, in many respects, a peculiarly precious opportunity. And accordingly I have not neglected you: I have endeavored to do the part of a faithful shepherd, in feeding the lambs as well as the sheep. Christ did once commit the care of your souls to me as your minister; and you know, dear children, how I have instructed you, and warned you from time to time; you know how I have often called you together for that end; and some of you, sometimes, have seemed to be affected with what I have said to you. But I am afraid it has had no saving effects as to many of you; but that you remain still in an unconverted condition, without any real saving work wrought in your souls, convincing you thoroughly of your sin and misery, causing you to see the great evil of sin, and to mourn for it, and hate it above all things, and giving you a sense of the excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ, bringing you with all your hearts to cleave to him as your Saviour, weaning your hearts from the world, and causing you to love God above all, and to delight in holiness more than in all the pleasant things of this earth; and so that I now leave you in a miserable condition,

having no interest in Christ, and so under the awful displeasure and anger of God, and in danger of going down to the pit of eternal misery.

But now I must bid you farewell: I must leave you in the hands of God; I can do no more for you than to pray for you. Only I desire you not to forget, but often think of the counsels and warnings I have given you, and the endeavors I have used, that your souls might be saved from everlasting destruction.

Dear children, I leave you in an evil world, that is full of snares and temptations. God only knows what will become of you. This the Scripture hath told us, that there are but few saved; and we have abundant confirmation of it from what we see. This we see, that children die as well as others: multitudes die before they grow up; and of those that grow up, comparatively few ever give good evidence of saving conversion to God. I pray God to pity you, and take care of you, and provide for you the best means for the good of your souls; and that God himself would undertake for you to be your heavenly Father, and the mighty Redeemer of your immortal souls. Do not neglect to pray for yourselves: take heed you be not of the number of those who cast off fear, and restrain prayer before God. Constantly pray to God in secret; and often remember that great day when you must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and meet your minister there, who has so often counselled and warned you.

I conclude with a few words of advice to all in general, in some particulars, which are of great importance in order to the welfare and prosperity of this church and congregation.

1. One thing that greatly concerns you, as you would be a happy people, is the maintaining of *family order*.

We have had great disputes how the church ought to be regulated; and indeed the subject of these disputes was of great importance: but the due regulation of your families is of no less, and, in some respects, of much greater importance. Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church, consecrated to Christ, and wholly influenced and governed by his rules. And family education and order are some of the chief of the means of grace. If these fail, all other means are like to prove ineffectual. If these are daily maintained, all the means of grace will be like to prosper and be successful.

Let me now, therefore, once more, before I finally cease to speak to this congregation, repeat and earnestly press the counsel which I have often urged on heads of families here, while I was their pastor, to great painfulness, in teaching, warning, and directing their children; bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; beginning early, when there is yet opportunity, and maintaining a constant diligence in labors of this kind; remembering that, as you would not have all your instructions and counsels ineffectual, there must be government as well as instructions, which must be maintained with an even hand, and steady resolution, as a guard to the religion and morals of the family, and the support of its good order. Take heed that it be not with any of you as with Eli of old, who reproved his children but restrained them not; and that, by this means, you do not bring the like curse on your families as he did on his.

And let children obey their parents, and yield to their instructions, and submit to their orders, as they would inherit a blessing and not a curse. For we have reason to think, from many things in the word of God, that nothing has a greater tendency to bring a curse on persons in this world, and on all their temporal concerns, than an undutiful, unsubmissive, disorderly behavior in children towards their parents.

2. As you would seek the future prosperity of this society, it is of vast importance that you should avoid contention.

A contentious people will be a miserable people. The contentions which have been among you, since I first became your pastor, have been one of the greatest burdens I have labored under in the course of my ministry: not only the contentions you have had with me, but those which you have had one with another, about your lands and other concerns. Because I knew that contention, heat of spirit, evil speaking, and things of the like nature, were directly contrary to the spirit of Christianity, and did, in a peculiar manner, tend to drive away God's Spirit from a people, and to render all means of grace ineffectual, as well as to destroy a people's outward comfort and welfare.

Let me therefore earnestly exhort you, as you would seek your own future good hereafter, to watch against a contentious spirit. "If you would see good days, seek peace, and ensue it," 1 Pet. iii. 10, 11. Let the contention, which has lately been about the terms of Christian communion, as it has been the greatest of your contentions, so be the last of them. I would, now I am preaching my farewell sermon, say to you, as the Apostle to the Corinthians, 2 Cor. xiii. 11, 12: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect: be of one mind: live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

And here I would particularly advise those that have adhered to me in the late controversy, to watch over their spirits, and avoid all bitterness towards others. Your temptations are, in some respects, the greatest; because what has been lately done is grievous to you. But however wrong you may think others have done, maintain, with great diligence and watchfulness, a Christian meekness and sedateness of spirit; and labor, in this respect, to excel others who are of the contrary part. And this will be the best victory: for "he that rules his spirit, is better than he that takes a city." Therefore let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory. Indulge no revengeful spirit in any wise; but watch and pray against it; and, by all means in your power, seek the prosperity of the town: and never think you behave yourselves as becomes Christians, but when you sincerely, sensibly, and fervently love all men, of whatever party or opinion, and whether friendly or unkind, just or injurious, to you or your friends, or to the cause and kingdom of Christ.

3. Another thing that vastly concerns the future prosperity of this town, is, that you should watch against the encroachments of error; and particularly Arminianism, and doctrines of like tendency.

You were, many of you, as I well remember, much alarmed with the apprehension of the danger of the prevailing of these corrupt principles, near sixteen years ago. But the danger then was small in comparison of what appears now. These doctrines at this day are much more prevalent than they were then: the progress they have made in the land, within this seven years, seems to have been vastly greater than at any time in the like space before: and they are still prevailing and creeping into almost all parts of the land, threatening the utter ruin of the credit of those doctrines which are the peculiar glory of the gospel, and the interests of vital piety. And I have of late perceived some things among yourselves, that show that you are far from being out of danger, but on the contrary remarkably exposed. The older people may perhaps think themselves sufficiently fortified against infection; but it is fit that all should beware of self-confidence and carnal security, and should remember those needful warnings of sacred writ, "Be not high-minded, but fear; and let him that stands, take heed lest he fall." But let the case of the older people be as it will, the rising generation are doubtless greatly exposed. These principles are exceeding taking with corrupt nature, and are what young people, at least such as have not their hearts established with grace, are easily led away with.

And if these principles should greatly prevail in this town, as they very lately have done in another large town I could name, formerly greatly noted for religion, and so for a long time, it will threaten the spiritual and eternal ruin of this people, in the present and future generations. Therefore you have need of the greatest and most diligent care and watchfulness with respect to this matter.

4. Another thing which I would advise to, that you may hereafter be a prosperous people, is, that you would give yourselves much to prayer.

God is the fountain of all blessing and prosperity, and he will be sought to for his blessing. I would therefore advise you not only to be constant in secret and family prayer, and in the public worship of God in his house, but also often to assemble yourselves in private praying societies. I would advise all such as are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, and sensibly affected with the calamities of this town, of whatever opinion they be with relation to the subject of our late controversy, often to meet together for prayer, and to cry to God for his mercy to themselves, and mercy to this town, and mercy to Zion and the people of God in general through the world.

5. The last article of advice I would give (which doubtless does greatly concern your prosperity), is, that you would take great care with regard to the settlement of a minister, to see to it who, or what manner of person he is that you settle; and particularly in these two respects,

(1.) That he be a man of thoroughly sound principles in the scheme of doctrine which he maintains.

This you will stand in the greatest need of, especially at such a day of corruption as this is. And in order to obtain such a one, you had need to exercise extraordinary care and prudence. I know the danger. I know the manner of many young gentlemen of corrupt principles, their ways of concealing themselves, the fair, specious disguises they are wont to put on, by which they deceive others, to maintain their own credit, and get themselves into others' confidence and improvement, and secure and establish their own interest, until they see a convenient opportunity to begin more openly to broach and propagate their corrupt tenets.

(2.) Labor to obtain a man who has an established character, as a person of serious religion and fervent piety.

It is of vast importance that those who are settled in this work should be men of true piety, at all times, and in all places; but more especially at some times, and in some towns and churches. And this present time, which is a time wherein religion is in danger, by so many corruptions in doctrine and practice, is in a peculiar manner a day wherein such ministers are necessary. Nothing else but sincere piety of heart is at all to be depended on, at such a time as this, as a security to a young man, just coming into the world, from the prevailing infection, or thoroughly to engage him in proper and successful endeavors to withstand and oppose the torrent of error, and prejudice, against the high, mysterious, evangelical doctrines of the religion of Jesus Christ, and their genuine effects in true experimental religion. And this place is a place that does peculiarly need such a minister, for reasons obvious to all.

If you should happen to settle a minister who knows nothing truly of Christ, and the way of salvation by him, nothing experimentally of the nature of vital religion; alas, how will you be exposed as sheep without a shepherd! Here is need of one in this place, who shall be eminently fit to stand in the gap, and make up the hedge, and who shall be as the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. You need one that shall stand as a champion in the cause of truth and the power of godliness

Having briefly mentioned these important articles of advice, nothing remains, but that I now take my leave of you, and bid you all *farewell;* wishing and praying for your best prosperity. I would now commend your immortal souls to Him, who formerly committed them to me, expecting the day, when I must meet you again before Him, who is the Judge of quick and dead. I desire that I may never forget this people, who have been so long my special charge, and that I may never cease fervently to pray for your prosperity. May God bless you with a faithful pastor, one that is well acquainted with his mind and will, thoroughly warning sinners, wisely and skilfully searching professors, and conducting you in the way to eternal blessedness. May you have truly a burning and shining light set up in this candlestick; and may you, not only for a season, but during his whole life, and that a long life, be willing to rejoice in his light.

And let me be remembered in the prayers of all God's people that are of a calm spirit, and are peaceable and faithful in Israel, of whatever opinion they may be with respect to terms of church communion.

And let us all remember, and never forget our future solemn meeting on that great day of the Lord; the day of infallible decision, and of the everlasting and unalterable sentence. AMEN.

THE RESULT OF A COUNCIL OF NINE CHURCHES, MET AT NORTHAMPTON, JUNE 22, 175C.

AT A COUNCIL OF NINE CHURCHES, VIZ.,

THE church in Enfield, Rev. Peter Reynolds, pastor; Mr. Edward Collins, delegate.

Sheffield, Jonathan Hubbard, pastor; Mr. Daniel Kellogg, delegate.

Sutton, David Hall, pastor; Mr. Jonathan Hall, delegate.

Reading, William Hobby, pastor; Mr. Samuel Bancroft, delegate.

The first church in Springfield, Robert Breck, pastor; Mr. Thomas Stebbins, delegate.

Sunderland, Joseph Ashley, pastor; Mr. Samuel Montague, delegate.

Hatfield, Timothy Woodbridge, pastor; Oliver Partridge, Esq., delegate.

The first church in Hadley, Chester Williams, pastor; Mr. Enos Nash, delegate.

Pelham, Robert Abercrombie, pastor; Mr. Matthew Gray, delegate.

Convened at the call of the first church in Northampton, together with the elder of the church in Cold Spring,* added by the consent of both the pastor and church of Northampton, in order to advise to a remedy from the calamities arising from the unsettled, broken state of the first church in Northampton, by reason of a controversy subsisting about the qualifications for full communion in the church.

The Reverend Mr. Hubbard was chosen moderator, and the Reverend Mr. Williams, scribe.

The council, after seeking the divine presence and direction, had the mat-

* Rev. Mr. Billing.

ter in controversy laid before them, and finding the sentiments of the pastor and church concerning the qualifications necessary for full communion, to be diametrically opposite to each other; the pastor insisting upon it as necessary to the admission of members to full communion, that they should make a profession of sanctifying grace; whereas the brethren are of opinion that the Lord's supper is a converting ordinance, and consequently that persons, if they have a competency of knowledge and are of a blameless life, may be admitted to the Lord's table, although they make no such profession: and also finding that, by reason of this diversity of sentiments, the doors of the church have been some years, so that there has been no admission: and not being able to find out any method wherein the pastor and brethren can unite; consistent with their own sentiments, in admitting members to full communion: the council did then, according to the desire of the church, expressed in their letters missive, proceed to consider the expediency of dissolving the relation between pastor and people; and, after hearing the church upon it, and mature deliberation of the case, the questions were put to the members of the council severally:

1. Whether it be the opinion of this council that the Reverend Mr. Edwards persisting in his principles, and the church in theirs in opposition to his, and insisting on a separation, it is necessary that the relation between pastor and people be dissolved? *Resolved in the affirmative.*

2. Whether it be expedient that this relation be immediately dissolved? *Passed in the affirmative.*

However, we take notice that notwithstanding the unhappy dispute which has arisen, and so long subsisted between the pastor and church of Northampton, upon the point before mentioned, we have no other objection against him, but what relates to his sentiments upon the point aforesaid, laid before us: and although we have heard of some stories spread abroad, reflecting upon Mr. Edwards' sincerity with regard to the change of his sentiments about the qualifications for full communion; yet we have received full satisfaction that they are false and groundless: and although we do not all of us agree with Mr. Edwards in our sentiments upon the point, yet we have abundant reason to believe that he took much pains to get light in that matter; and that he is uprightly following the dictates of his own conscience; and with great pleasure reflect upon the Christian spirit and temper he has discovered in the unhappy controversy subsisting among them; and think ourselves bound to testify our full charity towards him, and recommend him to any church or people agreeing with him in sentiments, as a person eminently qualified for the work of the gospel ministry.

And we would recommend it to the Rev. Mr. Edwards and the first church in Northampton, to take proper notice of the heavy frown of divine Providence, in suffering them to be reduced to such a state as to render a separation necessary, after they have lived so long and amicably together, and been mutual blessings and comforts to each other.

And now, recommending the Rev. Mr. Edwards, and the church in Northampton, to the grace of God, we subscribe,

JONATHAN HUBBARD, Moderator,
In the name of the Council.

Northampton, June 22. 1750.

A true copy examined by

CHESTER WILLIAMS, Scribe.

AN

HUMBLE INQUIRY

INTO THE

RULES OF THE WORD OF GOD,

CONCERNING

THE QUALIFICATIONS

REQUISITE TO A

COMPLETE STANDING AND FULL COMMUNION

IN THE

VISIBLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

PREFACE.

My appearing in this public manner on that side of the question, which is defended in the following sheets, will probably be surprising to many, as it is well known, that Mr. Stoddard, so great and eminent a divine, and my venerable predecessor in the pastoral office over the church in Northampton, as well as my own grandfather, publicly and strenuously appeared in opposition to the doctrine here maintained.

However, I hope, it will not be taken amiss, that I think as I do, merely because I herein differ from him, though so much my superior, and one whose name and memory I am under distinguishing obligations on every account, to treat with great respect and honor. Especially may I justly expect, that it will not be charged on me as a crime, that I do not think in every thing just as he did, since none more than he himself asserted this scriptural and Protestant maxim, that we ought to *call no man on earth Master*, or make the authority of the greatest and holiest of mere men the ground of our belief of any doctrine in religion. Certainly we are not obliged to think any man infallible, who himself utterly disclaims infallibility. Very justly Mr. Stoddard observes in his *Appeal to the Learned*, p. 97: "All Protestants agree that there is no infallibility at Rome; and I know nobody else that pretends to any since the apostles' days." And he insists in his preface to his sermon on the same subject, that it argues no want of due respect in us to our forefathers, for us to examine their opinions. Some of his words in that preface contain a good apology for me, and are worthy to be repeated on this occasion. They are as follow:

"It may possibly be a fault (says Mr. Stoddard) to depart from the ways of our fathers: but it may also be a virtue, and an eminent act of obedience, to depart from them in some things. Men are wont to make a great noise, that we are bringing in innovations, and depart from the old way: but it is beyond me to find out wherein the iniquity does lie. We may see cause to alter some practices of our fathers, without despising of them, without priding ourselves in our wisdom, without apostasy, without abusing the advantages God has given us, without a spirit of compliance with corrupt men, without inclination to superstition, without making disturbance in the church of God: and there is no reason, that it should be turned as a reproach upon us. Surely it is commendable for us to examine the practices of our fathers; we have no sufficient reason to take practices upon trust from them. Let them have as high a character as belongs to them; yet we may not look upon their principles as oracles. Nathan himself missed it in his conjecture about building the house of God. He that believes principles because *they* affirm them, makes *idols* of them. And it would be no humility, but baseness of spirit, for us to judge ourselves incapable to examine the principles that have been handed down to us. If we be by any means fit to open the mysteries of the gospel, we are capable to judge of these matters: and it would ill become us, so to indulge ourselves in ease, as to neglect the examination of received principles. If the practices of our fathers in any particulars were mistaken, it is fit that they should be rejected; if they be not, they will bear examination. If we be forbidden to examine their practice, that will cut off all hopes of reformation."

Thus in these very seasonable and apposite sayings, Mr. Stoddard, though dead, yet speaketh: and here (to apply them to my own case) he tells me, that I am not at all blamable, for not taking his principles on trust; that notwithstanding the high character justly belonging to him, I ought not to look on his principles as oracles, as though he could not miss it, as well as Nathan himself in his conjecture about building the house of God; nay, surely that I am even to be commended, for examining his practice, and judging for myself; that it would ill become me, to do otherwise; that this would be no manifestation of humility, but rather show a baseness of spirit; that if I be not capable to judge for myself in these matters, I am by no means fit to open the mysteries of the gospel; that if I should believe his principles, because he advanced them, I should be guilty of making him an idol. Also he tells his and my flock, with all others, that it ill becomes them, so to indulge their ease, as to neglect examining received principles and practices; and that it is fit, mistakes in any partic-

ulars be reiected: that if in some things I differ in my judgment from him, it would be very unreasonable, on this account to make a great noise, as though I were bringing in innovations, and departing from the old way; that I may see cause to alter some practices of my grandfather and predecessor, without despising him, without priding myself in my wisdom, without apostasy, without despising the advantages God has given me, without inclination to superstition, and without making disturbance in the church of God; in short, that it is beyond him, to find out wherein the iniquity of my so doing lies; and that there is no reason why it should be turned as a reproach upon me. Thus, I think, he sufficiently vindicates my conduct in the present case, and warns all with whom I am concerned, not to be at all displeased with me, or to find the least fault with me, merely because I examine for myself, have a judgment of my own, and am for practising in some particulars different from him, how positive soever he was that his judgment and practice were right. It is reasonably hoped, and expected, that they who have a great regard to his judgment, will impartially regard his judgment, and hearken to his admonition in these things.

I can seriously declare, that an affectation of making a show as if I were something wiser than that excellent person, is exceeding distant from me, and very far from having the least influence in my appearing to oppose, in this way of the press, an opinion which he so earnestly maintained and promoted. Sure I am, I have not affected to vary from his judgment, nor in the least been governed by a spirit of contradiction, neither indulged a cavilling humor, in remarking on any of his arguments or expressions.

I have formerly been of his opinion, which I imbibed from his books, even from my childhood, and have in my proceedings conformed to his practice; though never without some difficulties in my view, which I could not solve: yet, however, a distrust of my own understanding, and deference to the authority of so venerable a man, the seeming strength of some of his arguments, together with the success he had in his ministry, and his great reputation and influence, prevailed for a long time to bear down my scruples. But the difficulties and uneasiness on my mind increasing, as I became more studied in divinity, and as I improved in experience; this brought me to closer diligence and care to search the Scriptures, and more impartially to examine and weigh the arguments of my grandfather, and such other authors as I could get on his side of the question. By which means, after long searching, pondering, viewing and reviewing, I gained satisfaction, became fully settled in the opinion I now maintain, as in the discourse here offered to public view; and dared to proceed no further in a practice and administration inconsistent therewith: which brought me into peculiar circumstances, laying me under an inevitable necessity publicly to declare and maintain the opinion I was thus established in; as also to do it from the press, and to do it at this time without delay. It is far from a pleasing circumstance of this publication, that it is against what my honored grandfather strenuously maintained, both from the pulpit and press. I can truly say, on account of this and some other considerations, it is what I engage in with the greatest reluctance, that ever I undertook any public service in my life. But the state of things with me is so ordered, by the sovereign disposal of the great governor of the world, that my doing this appeared to me very necessary and altogether unavoidable. I am conscious, not only is the interest of Religion concerned in this affair, but my own reputation, future usefulness, and my very subsistence, all seemed to depend on my freely opening and defending myself, as to my principles, and agreeable conduct in my pastoral charge; and on my doing it from the press: in which way alone am I able to state and justify my opinion, to any purpose, before the country (which is full of noise, misrepresentations, and many censures concerning this affair), or even before my own people, as all would be fully sensible, if they knew the exact state of the case.

I have been brought to this necessity in divine providence, by such a situation of affairs and coincidence of circumstances and events, as I choose at present to be silent about; and which it is not needful, nor perhaps expedient for me to publish to the world.

One thing among others that caused me to go about this business with so much backwardness, was the fear of e bad improvement some ill minded people might be ready, at this day, to make of the doctrine here defended; particularly that wild enthusiastical sort of people, who have of late gone into unjustifiable separations, even renouncing the ministers and churches of the land in general, under pretence of setting up a pure church. It is well known, that I have heretofore publicly remonstrated, both from the pulpit and press, against very many of the notions and practices of this kind of people; and shall be very sorry if what I now offer to the public, should be any

occasion of their encouraging or strengthening themselves in those notions and practices of theirs. To prevent which, I would now take occasion to declare, I am still of the same mind concerning them, that I have formerly manifested. I have the same opinion concerning the religion and inward experiences chiefly in vogue among them, as I had when I wrote my *Treatise on Religious Affections*, and when I wrote my *Observations and Reflections on Mr. Brainerd's Life*. I have no better opinion of their notion of a pure church by means of a spirit of discerning, their censorious outcries against the standing ministers and churches in general, their Lay ordinations, their Lay preachings, and public exhortings, and administering Sacraments; their assuming, self-confident, contentious, uncharitable, separating spirit; their going about the country, as sent by the Lord, to make proselytes; with their many other extravagant and wicked ways. My holding the doctrine that is defended in this discourse, is no argument of any change of my opinion concerning them; for when I wrote those two books before mentioned, I was of the same mind concerning the qualifications of communicants at the Lord's Table, that I am of now.

However, it is not unlikely, that some will still exclaim against my principles, as being of the same pernicious tendency with those of the Separatists; to such I can only by a solemn protestation aver the sincerity of my aims, and the great care I have exercised to avoid whatever is erroneous, or might be in any respect mischievous. But as to my success in these my upright aims and endeavors, I must leave it to every reader to judge for himself, after he has carefully perused, and impartially considered the following discourse; which, considering the nature and importance of the subject, I hope, all serious readers will accompany with their earnest prayers to the Father of lights, for his gracious direction and influence. And to him be glory in the churches by Christ Jesus. AMEN.

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

HUMBLE INQUIRY.

PART FIRST.

THE QUESTION STATED AND EXPLAINED.

The main question I would consider, and for the negative of which, I would offer some arguments in the following discourse, is this: Whether, according to the rules of Christ, any ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church of Christ in complete standing, but such as are in profession, and in the eye of the church's Christian judgment, godly or gracious persons?

When I speak of members of the visible church of Christ, in complete standing, I would be understood of those who are received as the proper immediate subjects of all the external privileges Christ has appointed for the ordinary members of his church. I say ordinary members, in distinction from any peculiar privileges and honors of church officers and rulers. All allow, there are some that are in some respect in the church of God, who are not members in complete standing, in the sense that has been explained. All that acknowledge infant baptism, allow infants, who are the proper subjects of baptism, and are baptized, to be in some sort members of the Christian church; yet none suppose them to be members in such standing as to be the proper immediate subjects of all ecclesiastical ordinances and privileges. But that some further qualifications are requisite in order to this, to be obtained, either in a course of nature, or by education, or by divine grace. And some who are baptized in infancy, even after they come to be adult, may yet remain for a season short of such a standing as has been spoken of; being destitute of sufficient knowledge, and perhaps some other qualifications, through the neglect of parents, or their own negligence, or otherwise; or because they carelessly neglect to qualify themselves for ecclesiastical privileges by making a public profession of the Christian faith, or owning the Christian covenant, or forbear to offer themselves as candidates for these privileges; and yet not be cast out of the church, or cease to be in any respect its members. This, I suppose, will also be generally allowed.

One thing mainly intended in the foregoing question is, whether any adult persons but such as are in profession and appearance endued with Christian grace or piety, ought to be admitted to the Christian Sacraments: particularly whether they ought to be admitted to the Lord's supper; and, if they are such as were not baptized in infancy, ought to be admitted to baptism. Adult persons having those qualifications that oblige others to receive them as the proper immediate subjects of the Christian sacraments, is the main thing intended in the question, by being such as ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church, in complete standing. There are many adult persons that by the allowance of all are in some respect within the church of God, who are not members in good standing, in this respect. There are many, for instance, that have not at present the qualifications proper to re-

commend them to admission to the Lord's supper. There are many scandalous persons, who are under suspension. The late venerable Mr. Stoddard, and many other great divines suppose, that even excommunicated persons are still members of the church of God; and some suppose the worshippers of Baal in Israel, even those who were bred up such from their infancy, remained still members of the church of God. And very many Protestant divines suppose, that the members of the church of Rome, though they are brought up and live continually in gross idolatry, and innumerable errors and superstitions that tend utterly to make void the gospel of Christ, still are in the visible church of Christ. Yet, I suppose, no orthodox divines would hold these to be properly and regularly qualified for the Lord's supper. It was therefore requisite, in the question before us, that a distinction should be made between members of the visible church in general, and members in complete standing.

It was also requisite that such a distinction should be made in the question, to avoid lengthening out this discourse exceedingly with needless questions and debates concerning the state of baptized infants;—that is needless as to my present purpose. Though I have no doubts about the doctrine of infant baptism; yet God's manner of dealing with such infants as are regularly dedicated to him in baptism, is a matter liable to great disputes and many controversies, and would require a large dissertation by itself to clear it up; which, as it would extend this discourse beyond all bounds, so it appears not necessary in order to a clear determination of the present question. The revelation of God's word is much plainer and more express concerning adult persons, that act for themselves in religious matters, than concerning infants. The Scriptures were written for the sake of adult persons, or those that are capable of knowing what is written. It is to such the apostles speak in their epistles, and to such only does God speak throughout his word. And the Scriptures especially speak for the sake of those, and about those to whom they speak. And therefore if the word of God affords us light enough concerning those spoken of in the question, as I have stated it, clearly to determine the matter with respect to them, we need not wait until we see all doubts and controversies about baptized infants cleared and settled, before we pass a judgment with respect to the point in hand. The denominations, characters, and descriptions, which we find given in Scripture to visible Christians, and to the visible church, are principally with an eye to the church of Christ in its adult state and proper standing. If any one was about to describe that kind of birds called doves, it would be most proper to describe grown doves, and not young ones in the egg or nest, without wings or feathers. So if any one should describe a palm-tree or olive-tree by its visible form and appearance, it would be presumed that he described those of these kinds of trees in their mature and proper state; and not as just peeping from the ground, or as thunder-struck or blown down. And therefore I would here give notice, once for all, that when in the ensuing discourse I use such like phrases as visible saints, members of the visible church, &c., I, for the most part, mean persons that are adult and in good standing.

The question is not, whether Christ has made converting grace or piety itself the condition or rule of his people's admitting any to the privileges of members in full communion with them There is no one qualification of mind whatsoever, that Christ has properly made the term of this; not so much as a common belief that Jesus is the Messiah, or a belief of the being of a God. It is the credible profession and visibility of these things, that is the church's rule in this case. Christian piety or godliness may be a qualification requisite to communion in the Christian sacraments, just in the same manner as a belief that Jesus

is the Messiah, and the Scripture the word of God, are requisite qualifications; and in the same manner as some kind of repentance is a qualification requisite in one that has been suspended for being grossly scandalous, in order to his coming again to the Lord's supper; and yet godliness itself not be properly the rule of the church's proceeding, in like manner as such a belief and repentance, as I have mentioned, are not their rule. It is a visibility to the eye of a Christian judgment, that is the rule of the church's proceeding in each of these cases.

Two distinctions must be here observed; as, 1. We must distinguish between such qualifications as are requisite to give a person a right to ecclesiastical privileges in *foro ecclesiæ*, or a right to be admitted by the church to those privileges, and those qualifications that are a proper and good foundation for a man's own conduct in coming and offering himself as a candidate for immediate admission to these privileges. There is a difference between these. Thus, for instance, a profession of the belief of a future state and of revealed religion, and some other things that are internal and out of sight, and a visibility of these things to the eye of a Christian judgment, is all, relating to these things, that is requisite to give a man a right in *foro ecclesiæ*, or before the church; but it is the real existence of these things, that is what lays a proper and good foundation for his making this profession, and so demanding these privileges. None will suppose that he has good and proper ground for such a conduct, who does not believe another world, nor believe the Bible to be the word of God. And then,

2. We must distinguish between that which nextly brings an obligation on a man's conscience to seek admission to a Christian ordinance, and that which is a good foundation for the dictate of an enlightened, well informed conscience, and so is properly a solid foundation of a right in him to act thus. Certainly this distinction does really take place among mankind in innumerable cases. The dictates of men's consciences are what do bring them under a next or most immediate obligation to act: but it is that which is a good foundation for such a dictate of an enlightened conscience, that alone is a solid foundation of a right in him so to act. A believing the doctrine of the Trinity with all the heart, in some sense (let us suppose a moral sense) is one thing requisite in order to a person's having a solid foundation of a right in him to go to and demand baptism in the name of the Trinity: but his best judgment or dictate of his conscience, concerning his believing this doctrine with this sincerity, or with all his heart, may be sufficient to bring an obligation on his conscience. Again, when a delinquent has been convicted of scandal, it is repentance in some respect sincere (suppose a moral sincerity) that is the proper foundation of a right in him to offer himself for forgiveness and restoration: but it is the dictate of his conscience or his best judgment concerning his sincerity, that is the thing which immediately obliges him to offer himself. It is repentance itself, that is the proper qualification fundamental of his right, and what he cannot have a proper right without; for though he may be deceived, and think he has real repentance when he has not, yet he has not properly a right to be deceived; and perhaps deceit in such cases is always owing to something blamable, or the influence of some corrupt principle: but yet his best judgment brings him under obligation. In the same manner, and no otherwise, I suppose that Christian grace itself is a qualification requisite in order to a proper solid ground of a right in a person to come to the Christian sacraments. But of this I may say something more when I come to answer objections.

When I speak, in the question, of a being godly or gracious in the eye of a Christian judgment, by Christian judgment I intend something further than a

kind of mere negative charity, implying that we forbear to censure and condemn a man, because we do not know but that he may be godly, and therefore forbear to proceed on the foot of such a censure or judgment in our treatment of him: as we would kindly entertain a stranger, not knowing but in so doing we entertain an angel or precious saint of God. But I mean a positive judgment, founded on some positive appearance, or visibility, some outward manifestations that ordinarily render the thing probable. There is a difference between suspending our judgment, or forbearing to condemn, or having some hope that possibly the thing may be so, and so hoping the best; and a positive judgment in favor of a person. For a having some hope, only implies that a man is not in utter despair of a thing, though his prevailing opinion may be otherwise, or he may suspend his opinion. Though we cannot know a man believes that Jesus is the Messiah, yet we expect some positive manifestation or visibility of it, to be a ground of our charitable judgment: so I suppose the case is here.

When I speak of Christian judgment, I mean a judgment wherein men do properly exercise reason, and have their reason under the influence of love and other Christian principles; which do not blind reason, but regulate its exercises; being not contrary to reason, though they be very contrary to censoriousness or unreasonable niceness and rigidness.

I say in the eye of the church's Christian judgment, because it is properly a visibility to the eye of the public charity, and not of a private judgment, that gives a person a right to be received as a visible saint by the public. If any are known to be persons of an honest character, and appear to be of good understanding in the doctrines of Christianity, and particularly those doctrines that teach the grand condition of salvation, and the nature of true saving religion, and publicly and seriously profess the great and main things wherein the essence of true religion or godliness consists, and their conversation is agreeable; this justly recommends them to the good opinion of the public, whatever suspicions and fears any particular person, either the minister or some other, may entertain, from what he in particular has observed, perhaps from the manner of his expressing himself in giving an account of his experiences or an obscurity in the order and method of his experiences, &c. The minister, in receiving him to the communion of the church, is to act as a public officer, and in behalf of the public society, and not merely for himself, and therefore is to be governed in acting, by a proper visibility of godliness in the eye of the public.

It is not my design, in holding the negative of the foregoing question, to affirm, that all who are regularly admitted as members of the visible church in complete standing, ought to be believed to be godly or gracious persons, when taken collectively, or considered in the gross, by the judgment of any person or society. This may not be, and yet each person taken singly may visibly be a gracious person to the eye of the judgment of Christians in general. These two are not the same thing, but vastly diverse; and the latter may be, and yet not the former. If we should know so much of a thousand persons one after another, and from what we observed in them should have a prevailing opinion concerning each one of them, singly taken, that they were indeed pious, and think the judgment we passed, when we consider each judgment apart, to be right; it will not follow, when we consider the whole company collectively, that we shall have so high an opinion of our own judgment, as to think it probable, there was not one erroneous judgment in the whole thousand. We all have innumerable judgments about one thing or other, concerning religious, moral, secular, and philosophical affairs, concerning past, present, and future matters, reports, facts, persons, things, &c.,&c. And concerning all the many thousand dictates of

judgment that we have, we think them every one right, taken singly; for if there was any one that we thought wrong, it would not be our judgment; and yet there is no man, unless he is stupidly foolish, who when he considers all in the gross, will say he thinks that every opinion he is of, concerning all persons and things whatsoever, important and trifling, is right, without the least error. But the more clearly to illustrate this matter, as it relates to visibility, or probable appearances of holiness in professsors: supposing it had been found by experience concerning precious stones, that such and such external marks were probable signs of a diamond, and it is made evident, by putting together a great number of experiments, that the probability is as ten to one, and no more nor less; i. e. that, take one time with another, there is one in ten of the stones that have these marks (and no visible signs to the contrary) proves not a true diamond, and no more; then it will follow, that when I find a particular stone with these marks, and nothing to the contrary, there is a probability of ten to one, concerning that stone, that it is a diamond; and so concerning each stone that I find with these marks: but if we take ten of these together, it is as probable as not, that some one of the ten is spurious; because, if it were not as likely as not, that one in ten is false, or if taking one ten with another, there were not one in ten that was false, then the probability of those, that have these marks, being true diamonds, would be more than ten to one, contrary to the supposition; because that is what we mean by a probability of ten to one, that they are not false, viz., that take one ten with another there will be one false one among them, and no more. Hence if we take a hundred such stones together, the probability will be just ten to one, that there is one false among them; and as likely as not that there are ten false ones in the whole hundred: and the probability of the individuals must be much greater than ten to one, even a probability of more than a hundred to one, in order to its making it probable that every one is true. It is an easy mathematical demonstration. Hence the negative of the foregoing question by no means implies a pretence of any scheme, that shall be effectual to keep all hypocrites out of the church, and for the establishing in that sense a pure church.

When it is said, those who are admitted, &c., ought to be by profession godly or gracious persons, it is not meant, they should merely profess or say that they are converted, or are gracious persons, that they know so, or think so; but that they profess the great things wherein Christian piety consists, viz., a supreme respect to God, faith in Christ, &c. Indeed it is necessary, as men would keep a good conscience, that they should think that these things are in them, which they profess to be in them; otherwise they are guilty of the horrid wickedness of wilfully making a lying profession. Hence it is supposed to be necessary, in order to men's regularly and with a good conscience coming into communion with the church of Christ in the Christian sacraments, that they themselves should suppose the essential things, belonging to Christian piety, to be in them.

It does not belong to the present question, to consider and determine what the nature of Christian piety is, or wherein it consists. This question may be properly determined, and the determination demonstrated, without entering into any controversies about the nature of conversion, &c. Nor does an asserting the negative of the question determine any thing how particular the profession of godliness ought to be, but only, that the more essential things, which belong to it, ought to be professed. Nor is it determined, but that the public professions made on occasion of persons' admission to the Lord's supper, in some of our churches, who yet go upon that principle, that persons need not esteem them-

selves truly gracious in order to a coming conscientiously and properly to the Lord's supper; I say, it is not determined but that some of these professions are sufficient, if those that made them were taught to use the words, and others to understand them, in no other than their proper meaning; and principle and custom had not established a meaning very diverse from it, or perhaps a use of the words without any distinct and clear determinate meaning.

PART SECOND.

REASONS FOR THE NEGATIVE OF THE FOREGOING QUESTION.

HAVING thus explained what I mean when I say, that none ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church of Christ in complete standing, but such as are in profession and in the eye of the church's Christian judgment, godly or gracious persons: I now proceed to observe some things which may tend to evince the truth of this position. And here,

I. I begin with observing, I think it is both evident by the word of God, and also granted on all hands, that none ought to be admitted as members of the visible church of Christ but visible saints and professing saints, or visible and professing Christians. We find the word saint, when applied to men, used two ways in the New Testament. The word in some places is so used as to mean those that are real saints, who are converted, and are truly gracious persons; as 1 Cor. vi. 2, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" Eph. i. 18, "The riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Chap. iii. 17, 18, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth," &c. 2 Thes. i. 10, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." So Rev. v. 8, chap. viii. 4, and xi. 18, and xiii. 10, and xiv. 12, and xix. 8. In other places the word is used so as to have respect not only to real saints, but to such as were saints in visibility appearance, and profession; and so were outwardly, as to what concerns their acceptance among men and their outward treatment and privileges, of the company of saints. So the word is used in very many places, which it is needless to mention, as every one acknowledges it.

In like manner we find the word Christian used two ways. The word is used to express the same thing as a righteous man that shall be saved, 1 Pet. iv. 16, 17, 18. Elsewhere it is so used as to take in all that were Christians by profession and outward appearance, Acts xi. 26. So there is a twofold use of the word disciples in the New Testament. There were disciples in name, profession, and appearance; and there were those whom Christ calls disciples indeed, John viii. 30, 31. The word is *αληθῶς*, *truly*. The expression plainly supposes this distinction of true or real disciples, and those who were the same in pretence and appearance. See also Luke xiv. 25, 26, 27, and John xv. 8. The same distinction is signified in the New Testament, by those that live, being alive from the dead, and risen with Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 11, Rom vi. 11, and elsewhere; and those who have a name to live, having only a pretence and appearance of life. And the distinction of the visible church of Christ into these two, is plainly signified of the growth of the good ground, and that in the stony and thorny ground, which had the same appearance and show with

the other, until it came to wither away; and also by the two sorts of virgins, Matt. xxv., who both had a show, profession, and visibility of the same thing. By these things, and many others which might be observed, it appears that the distinction of real saints and visible and professing saints is scriptural, and that the visible church was made up of these two, and that none are according to Scripture admitted into the visible church of Christ, but those who are visible and professing saints or Christians. And it is the more needless to insist longer upon it, because it is not a thing in controversy. So far as my small reading will inform me, it is owned by all Protestants. To be sure, the most eminent divine in New England, who has appeared to maintain the Lord's supper to be properly a converting ordinance, was very full in it. In his *Appeal to the Learned*, in the title page, and through the treatise, he supposes that all who come to the Lord's supper, must be visible saints, and sometimes speaks of them as professing saints, pages 85, 86: and supposes that it is requisite in order to their being admitted to the communion of the Lord's table, that they make a personal, public profession of their faith and repentance to the just satisfaction of the church, pages 93, 94. In these things the whole of the position that I would prove is in effect granted. If it be allowed (as it is allowed on all sides) that none ought to be admitted to the communion of the Christian visible church but visible and professing saints or Christians; if these words are used in any propriety of speech, or in any agreement with Scripture representations, the whole of that which I have laid down is either implied or will certainly follow.

As real saints are the same with real converts, or really gracious persons, so visible saints are the same with visible converts, or those that are visibly converted and gracious persons. Visibility is the same with manifestation or appearance to our view and apprehension. And, therefore, to be visibly a gracious person, is the same thing as to be a truly gracious person to our view, apprehension, or esteem. The distinction of *real* and *visible* does not only take place with regard to saintship or holiness, but with regard to innumerable other things. There is visible and real truth, visible and real honesty, visible and real money, visible and real gold, visible and real diamonds, &c., &c. *Visible* and *real* are words that stand related one to another, as the words *real* and *seeming*, or *true* and *apparent*. Some seem to speak of visibility with regard to saintship or holiness, as though it had no reference to the reality, or as though it were a distinct reality by itself, as though by visible saints were not meant those who to appearance are real saints or disciples indeed, but properly a distinct sort of saints, which is an absurdity. There is a distinction between real money and visible money, because all that is esteemed money and passes for money, is not real money, but some is false and counterfeit. But yet by visible money, is not meant that which is taken and passes for a different sort of money from true money, but thereby is meant that which is esteemed and taken as real money, or which has that appearance that recommends it to men's judgment and acceptance as true money; though men may be deceived, and some of it may finally prove not to be so.

There are not properly two sorts of saints spoken of in Scripture: though the word saints may be said indeed to be used two ways in Scripture, or used so as to reach two sorts of persons; yet the word has not properly two significations in the New Testament, any more than the word *gold* has two significations among us. The word gold among us is so used as to extend to several sorts of substances; it is true, it extends to true gold, and also to that which only appears to be gold, and is reputed gold, and by that appearance or visi-

bility some things that are not real gold obtain the name of gold; but this is not properly through a diversity in the signification of the word, but by a diversity of the application of it, through the imperfection of our discerning. It does not follow that there are properly two sorts of saints, because there are some who are not real saints, that yet being visible or seeming saints do by the show and appearance they make obtain the name of saints and are reputed saints, and whom by the rules of Scripture (which are accommodated to our imperfect state) we are directed to receive and treat as saints; any more than it follows that there are two sorts of honest men, because some who are not truly honest men, yet being so seemingly or visibly, do obtain the name of honest men, and ought to be treated by us as such. So there are not properly two distinct churches of Christ, one the real, and another the visible; though they that are visibly or seemingly of the one only church of Christ, are many more than they who are really of his church; and so the visible or seeming church is of larger extent than the real.

Visibility is a relative thing, and has relation to an eye that views or beholds Visibility is the same as appearance or exhibition to the eye; and to be a visible saint is the same as to appear to be a real saint in the eye that beholds; not the eye of God, but the eye of man. Real saints or converts are those that are so in the eye of God; visible saints or converts are those who are so in the eye of man; not his bodily eye, for thus no man is a saint any more in the eye of a man than he is in the eye of a beast; but the eye of his mind, which is his judgment or esteem. There is no more visibility of holiness in the brightest professor to the eye of our bodies, without the exercise of the reason and judgment of our minds, than may be in a machine. But nothing short of an apparent probability, or a probable exhibition, can amount to a visibility to the eye of man's reason or judgment. The eye which God has given to man is the eye of reason; and the eye of a Christian is reason sanctified, regulated, and enlightened, by a principle of Christian love. But it implies a contradiction to say, that that is visible to the eye of reason, which does not appear probable to reason. And if there be a man that is in this sense a visible saint, he is in the eye of a rational judgment a real saint. To say a man is visibly a saint, but not visibly a real saint, but only visibly a visible saint, is a very absurd way of speaking; it is as much as to say, he is to appearance an appearing saint; which is in effect to say nothing, and to use words without signification. The thing which must be visible and probable, in order to visible saintship, must be saintship itself, or real grace and true holiness; not visibility of saintship, not unregenerate morality, not mere moral sincerity. To pretend to, or in any respect to exhibit moral sincerity, makes nothing visible beyond what is pretended to, or exhibited: for a man to have that visibly, which if he had it really, and have nothing more, would not make him a real saint, is not to be visibly a saint.

Mr. Stoddard, in his *Appeal to the Learned*, seems to express the very same notion of visibility, and that visibility of saintship which is requisite to a person's coming to the Lord's supper, that I have here expressed. In page 10, he makes a distinction between being visibly circumcised in heart, and being really so; evidently meaning by the latter saving conversion; and he allows the former, viz., a visibility of heart circumcision, to be necessary to a coming to the Lord's supper. So that according to him, it is not a visibility of moral sincerity only, but a visibility of circumcision of heart, or saving conversion, that is a necessary requisite to a person's coming to the Lord's table. And in what manner this must be visible, he signifies elsewhere, when he allows that it

must be so to a judgment of charity; a judgment of rational charity. This he expressly allows over and over; as in pages 2, 3, 28, 33, 72, and 95: and a having reason to look upon them as such, page 28. And towards the close of his book, he declares himself steadfastly of the mind, that it is requisite those be not admitted to the Lord's supper, who do not make a personal and public profession of their faith and repentance, to the just satisfaction of the church, pages 93, 94. But how he reconciled these passages with the rest of his treatise, I would modestly say, I must confess myself at a loss. And particularly I cannot see how they consist with what this venerable and ever honored author says, page 16, in these words: "Indeed by the rule that God has given for admissions, if it be carefully attended, more unconverted persons will be admitted than converted." I would humbly inquire, how those visible qualifications can be the ground of a rational judgment, that a person is circumcised in heart, which nevertheless, at the same time, we are sensible are so far from being any probable signs of it, that they are more frequently without it. The appearance of that thing surely cannot imply an appearing probability of another thing, which at the same time we are sensible is most frequently, and so most probably, without that other thing.

Indeed I can easily see, how that may seem visible, and appear probable to God's people, by reason of the imperfect and dark state they are in, and so may oblige their charity, which yet is not real, and which would not appear at all probable to angels, who stand in a clearer light; and the different degrees of light, that God's church stands in, in different ages, may make a difference in this respect. The church under the New Testament being favored by God with a vastly greater light in divine things, than the church under the Old Testament. That might make some difference, as to the kind of profession of religion that is requisite, under these different dispensations, in order to a visibility of holiness; also a proper visibility may fail in the greater number in some extraordinary case, and in exempt circumstances: but how those signs can be a ground of a rational judgment that a thing is, which, at that very time, and under that degree of light we then have, we are sensible do oftener fail than not, and this ordinarily, I own myself much at loss. Surely nothing but appearing reason is the ground of a rational judgment. And indeed it is impossible in the nature of things, to form a judgment, which at that very time we think to be not only without, but against probability.

If it be said that although persons do not profess that wherein sanctifying grace consists, yet seeing they profess to believe the doctrines of the gospel, which God is wont to make use of in order to men's sanctification, and are called the *doctrine which is according to godliness;* and since we see nothing in their lives to make us determine, that they have not had a proper effect on their hearts, we are obliged in charity to hope, that they are real saints, or gracious persons, and to treat them accordingly, and so to receive them into the Christian church, and to its special ordinances.

I answer, this objection does in effect suppose and grant the very thing mainly in dispute; for it supposes, that a gracious character is the thing that ought to be looked at and aimed at in admitting persons into the communion of the church; and so that it is needful to have this charity for persons, or such a favorable notion of them, in order to our receiving them as properly qualified members of the society, and properly qualified subjects of the special privileges they are admitted to. Whereas, the doctrine taught is, that sanctifying grace is not a necessary qualification herefor, and that there is no need that the person himself, or any other, should have any imagination, that he is a person so

qualified; because we know, it is no qualification requisite in itself; we know the ordinance of the Lord's supper is as proper for them, that are not so qualified as for those that are; it being according to the design of the institution a converting ordinance, and so an ordinance as much intended for the good of the unconverted, as of the converted; even as it is with the preaching of the gospel. Now if the case be so, why is there any talk about a charitable hoping they are converted, and so admitting them? What need of any charitable hope of such a qualification, in order to admitting them to an ordinance that is as proper for those who are without this qualification, as for those that have it? We need not have any charitable hope of any such qualification in order to admit a person to hear the word preached. What need have we to aim at any thing beyond the proper qualifications? And what manner of need of any charitable opinion or hope of any thing further? Some sort of belief, that Jesus is the Messiah, is a qualification properly requisite to a coming to the Lord's supper; and therefore it is necessary that we should have a charitable hope, that those have such a belief whom we admit; though it be not necessary that we should know it, it being what none can know of another. But as to grace or Christian piety, it clearly follows, on the principles which I oppose, that if there be any visibility of it, more or less, of any sort, yet no kind of visibility or appearance, whether more direct or indirect, whether to a greater or less degree, no charity or hope of it, have any thing at all to do in the affair of admission to the Lord's supper; for, according to them, it is properly a converting ordinance. What has any visibility or hope of a person's being already in health to do in admitting him into a hospital for the use of those means that are the proper appointed means for the healing of the sick, and bringing them to health? And therefore it is needless here to dispute about the nature of visibility; and all arguing concerning a profession of Christian doctrines, and an orderly life being a sufficient ground of public charity, and an obligation on the church to treat them as saints, are wholly impertinent and nothing to the purpose. For on the principles which I oppose, there is no need of any sort of ground for treating them as saints, in order to admitting them to the Lord's supper, the very design of which is to make them saints, any more than there is need of some ground of treating a sick man as being a man in health, in order to admitting him into a hospital. Persons, by the doctrine that I oppose, are not taught to offer themselves as candidates for church communion under any such notion, or with any such pretence, as their being gracious persons; and therefore surely when those that teach them, receive them to the ordinance, they do not receive them under any such notion, nor has any notion, appearance, hope or thought of it, any thing to do in the case.

The apostle speaks of the members of the Christian church, as those that made a profession of godliness. 2 Cor. ix. 13, "They glorified God for your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ." 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10, "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel—not with costly array; but, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works." The apostle is speaking of the women that were members of that great church of Ephesus, which Timothy for the present had the care of; and he speaks of them as supposing that they all professed godliness. By the allowance of all profession is one thing belonging to the visibility of Christianity or holiness, that there is in the members of the visible church. Visible holiness is an appearance or exhibition of holiness, by those things which are external, and so fall under our notice and observation. And these are two, viz., profession and outward behavior, agreeable to that profession. That profession which belongs

to visible saintship, must be a profession of godliness, or real saintship; for a profession makes nothing visible beyond what is professed. What is it, to be a saint by profession but to be by profession a true saint? For to be by profession a false saint, is to be by profession no saint; and only to profess that, which if ever so true, is nothing peculiar to a saint, is not to be a professing saint.

In order to a man's being properly a professing Christian, he must profess the religion of Jesus Christ: and he surely does not profess the religion that was taught by Jesus Christ, if he leaves out of his profession the most essential things that belong to that religion. That which is most essential in that religion itself, the profession of that is essential in a profession of that religion; for (as I have observed elsewhere) that which is most essential in a thing, in order to its being truly denominated that thing, the same is essentially necessary to be expressed or signified in any exhibition or declaration of that thing, in order to its being truly denominated a declaration or exhibition of that thing. If we take a more inconsiderable part of Christ's religion, and leave out the main and most essential, surely what we have cannot be properly called the religion of Jesus Christ: so if we profess only a less important part, and are silent about the most important and essential part, it cannot be properly said that we profess the religion of Jesus Christ. And therefore we cannot in any propriety be said to profess the Christian or Christ's religion, unless we profess those things wherein consists piety of heart, which is vastly the most important and essential part of that religion that Christ came to teach and establish in the world, and is in effect all; being that without which all the rest that belongs to it, is nothing, and wholly in vain. But they who are admitted to the Lord's supper, proceeding on the principles of those who hold it to be a converting ordinance, do in no respect profess Christian piety, neither in whole nor in part, neither explicitly nor implicitly, directly nor indirectly; and therefore are not professing Christians, or saints by profession. I mean, though they may be godly persons, yet as they come to the ordinance without professing godliness, they cannot properly be called professing saints.

Here it may be said, that although no explicit and formal profession of those things which belong to true piety, be required of them; yet there are many things they do, that are a virtual and implicit profession of these things: such as their owning the Christian covenant, their owning God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be their God; and by their visibly joining in the public prayers and singing God's praises, there is a show and implicit profession of supreme respect to God and love to him; by joining in the public confessions, they make a show of repentance; by keeping Sabbaths and hearing the word, they make a show of a spirit of obedience; by offering to come to sacraments, they make a show of love to Christ and a dependence on his sacrifice.

To this I answer: It is a great mistake, if any one imagines, that all these external performances are of a nature of a profession of any thing at all that belongs to saving grace, as they are commonly used and understood: and to be sure none of them are so, according to the doctrines that are taught and embraced, and the customs that are established in such churches as proceed on the foot of the principles forementioned. For what is professing, but exhibiting, uttering, or declaring, either by intelligible words, or by other established signs that are equivalent? But in such churches, neither their publicly saying, that they avouch God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be their God, and that they give themselves up to him, and promise to obey all his commands, nor their coming to the Lord's supper, or to any other ordinances, are taken for expressions or signs of any thing belonging to the essence of Christian piety. But

on the contrary, the public doctrine, principle, and custom in such churches establishes a diverse use of these words and signs. People are taught that they may use them all, and not so much as make any pretence to the least degree of sanctifying grace; and this is the established custom: so they are used, and so they are understood. And therefore whatever some of these words and signs may in themselves most properly and naturally import or signify, they entirely cease to be significations of any such thing among people accustomed to understand and use them otherwise; and so cease to be of the nature of a profession of Christian piety. There can be no such thing among such a people, as either an explicit or implicit profession of godliness by any thing which (by their established doctrine and custom) an unregenerate man may and ought to say and perform, knowing himself to be so. For let the words and actions otherwise signify what they will, yet that people have in effect agreed among themselves, that persons who use them, need not intend them so, and that others need not understand them so. And hence they cease to be of the nature of any pretension to grace. And surely it is an absurdity to say, that men openly and solemnly profess grace, and yet do not so much as pretend to it. If a certain people should agree, and it should be an established principle among them, that men might and ought to use such and such words to their neighbors, which according to their proper signification were a profession of entire love and devoted friendship towards the man they speak to, and yet not think that he has any love in his heart to him, yea, and know at the same time that he had a reigning enmity against him; and it was known that this was the established principle of the people; would not these words, whatever their proper signification was, entirely cease to be any profession or testimony of friendship to his neighbor? To be sure, there could be no visibility of it to the eye of reason.

Thus it is evident, that those who are admitted into the church on the principles that I oppose, are not professing saints, nor visible saints; because that thing which alone is truly saintship, is not what they profess, or make any pretence to, or have any visibility of, to the eye of a Christian judgment. Or if they in fact be visible and professing saints, yet, they are not admitted as such; no profession of true saintship, nor any manner of visibility of it, has any thing to do in the affair.

There is one way to evade these things, which has been taken by some. They plead, although it be true, that the Scripture represents the members of the visible church of Christ as professors of godliness; and they are abundantly called by the name of saints in Scripture, undoubtedly because they were saints by profession, and in visibility, and the acceptance of others; yet this is not with any reference to saving holiness, but to quite another sort of saintship, viz., moral sincerity; and that this is the real saintship, discipleship, and godliness, which is professed, and visible in them, and with regard to which, as having an appearance of it to the eye of reason, they have the name of saints, disciples, &c., in Scripture.

It must be noted, that in this objection the visibility is supposed to be of real saintship, discipleship, and godliness, but only another sort of real godliness, than that which belongs to those who shall finally be owned by Christ as his people, at the day of judgment.

To which I answer, This is a mere evasion; the only one, that ever I saw or heard of; and I think the only one possible. For it is certain, they are not professors of sanctifying grace, or true saintship: the principle proceeded on, being, that they need make no pretence to that; nor has any visibility of saving holiness any thing to do in the affair. If then they have any holiness at all, it

must be of another sort. And if this evasion fails, all fails, and the whole matter in debate must be given up. Therefore, I desire that this matter may be impartially considered and examined to the very bottom; and that it may be thoroughly inquired, whether this distinction of these two sorts of real Christianity, godliness, and holiness, is a distinction, that Christ in his word is the author of; or whether it be a human invention of something which the New Testament knows nothing of, devised to serve and maintain an hypothesis. And here I desire that the following things may be observed.

1. According to this hypothesis, the words saints, disciples, and Christians, are used four ways in the New Testament, as applied to four sorts of persons (1.) To those that in truth and reality are the heirs of eternal life, and that shall judge the world, or have indeed that saintship which is saving. (2.) To those who profess this, and pretend to and make a fair show of a supreme regard to Christ, and to renounce the world for his sake, but have not real ground for these pretences and appearances. (3.) To those who, although they have not saving grace, yet have that other sort of real godliness or saintship, viz., moral sincerity in religion; and so are properly a sort of real saints, true Christians, sincerely godly persons, and disciples indeed, though they have no saving grace. And (4,) to those who make a profession and have a visibility of this latter sort of sincere Christianity, and are nominally such kind of saints, but are not so indeed. So that here are two sorts of real Christians, and two sorts of visible Christians; two sorts of invisible and real churches of Christ, and two sorts of visible churches. Now will any one that is well acquainted with the New Testament say, there is in that the least appearance or shadow of such a fourfold use of the words, saints, disciples, &c.? It is manifest by what was observed before, that these words are there used but two ways; and that those of mankind to whom these names are applied, are there distinguished into but two sorts, viz., those who have really a saving interest in Christ, spiritual conformity and union to him, and those who have a name for it, as having a profession and appearance of it. And this is further evident by various representations, which we there find of the visible church; as in the company of virgins that went forth to meet the bridegroom, we find a distinction of them into but two sorts, viz., the wise that had both lamps and oil; and those who had lamps indeed like the wise virgins, (therein having an external show of the same thing, viz., oil), but really had no oil; signifying that they had the same profession and outward show of the same sort of religion, and entertained the same hopes with the wise virgins. So when the visible church is represented by the husbandman's floor, we find a distinction but of two sorts, viz., the wheat and the chaff. So again, when the church is compared to the husbandman's field, we find a distinction but of two sorts, the wheat and the tares, which (naturalists observe) show or appear exactly like the wheat, until it comes to bring forth its fruit; representing, that those who are only visible Christians, have a visibility or appearance of the nature of that wheat, which shall be gathered into Christ's barn; and that nature is saving grace.

2. It is evident, that those who had the name of disciples in the times of the New Testament, bore that name with reference to a visibility and pretence of the same relation to Christ, which they had who should be finally owned as his. This is manifest by John viii. 30, 31: "As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." (Compare Luke xiv. 25, 26, 27, and John xv. 8.) The phrase, disciples indeed, is relative; and has reference to a visibility, pretence or name, only, which it is set in opposition to, and has a

reference to that name and visibility that those, who then bore the name of disciples, had; which makes it evident, that those who then bore the name of disciples, had a visibility and pretence of the same discipleship Christ speaks of, which he calls true discipleship, or discipleship indeed; for true discipleship is not properly set in opposition to any thing else but a pretence to the same thing that is not true. The phrase, gold indeed, is in reference and opposition to something that has the appearance of that same metal, and not to an appearance of brass. If there were another sort of real discipleship in those days, besides saving discipleship, persons might be Christ's disciples indeed, or truly (as the word in the original is) without continuing in his word, and without selling all that they had, and without hating father and mother and their own lives, for his sake. By this it appears, that those who bore the name of disciples in those times were distinguished into but two sorts, disciples in name or visibility, and disciples indeed; and that the visibility and profession of the former was of the discipleship of the latter.

3. The same thing is evident by 1 John ii. 19: "They went out from us, because they were not of us: if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." The words naturally suggest and imply, that those professing Christians, who at last proved false, did, before they went out, seem to belong to the society of the true saints, or those endued with persevering grace and holiness; they seemed to be of their number; i. e., they were so in pretence and visibility, and so were accepted in the judgment of charity.

4. The name and visibility, that nominal or visible Christians had in the days of the New Testament, was of saving Christianity, and not of moral sincerity; for they had a name to live, though many of them were dead, Rev. iii. 1. Now it is very plain what that is in religion which is called by the name of life, all over the New Testament, viz., saving grace; and I do not know that any thing else, of a religious nature, is ever so called.

5. The visibility, that visible Christians had of saintship in the apostles' days, was not of moral sincerity, but gracious sincerity, or saving saintship. For they are spoken of as being visibly of the number of those saints who shall judge the world, and judge angels. 1 Cor. vi. 1, 2, 3, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know, that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged BY YOU, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that WE shall judge angels?" These things do manifestly imply, that if the Christian Corinthians were what they supposed they were, and what they professed to be, and what they were accepted to be, they were some of those saints who at the day of judgment should judge angels and men.

6. That the visibility was not only of moral sincerity, but saving grace, is manifest, because the apostle speaks of visible Christians as visible "members of Christ's body, of his flesh, and of his bones, and one spirit with him, and temples of the Holy Ghost," Eph. v. 30, and 1 Cor. vi. 16, 19. And the Apostle Peter speaks of visible Christians as those who were visibly such righteous persons as should be saved; and that are distinguished from the ungodly, and them that obey not the gospel, who shall perish. 1 Pet. iv. 16, 17, 18, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but et him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at US" (us Christians, comprehending himself, and those to whom he wrote, and all of that sort), "what shall the end of them be that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

7. That the visibility was not merely of moral sincerity, but of that sort of saintship which the saints in heaven have, is manifest by this, that they are often spoken of as visibly belonging to heaven, and as of the society of the saints in heaven. So the apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians speaks of them as visibly of the same household or family of God, a part of which is in heaven. Chap. ii. 19, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Together with the next chapter, ver. 15, "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Where the context and continuation of discourse demonstrate, that he is still speaking of the same family or household he had spoken of in the latter part of the preceding chapter. So all visible Christians are spoken of as visibly the children of the church which is in heaven. Gal. iv. 26, "Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all." The same apostle speaks of visible Christians as being visibly come to the heavenly city, and having joined the glorious company of angels there, and as visibly belonging to the "general assembly and church of the first born, that are written in heaven, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," Heb. xii. 22, 23. And elsewhere they are spoken of as being visibly of the number of those who have their "names written in the book of life," Rev. iii. 5, and xxii. 19. They who truly have their names written in the book of life, are God's true saints, that have saving grace, as is evident by Rev. xiii. 8: "And all that dwell on the earth, shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And chap. xx. 12, "And another book was opened, which was the book of life." Ver. 15, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." We are told, in the conclusion of this chapter, how they were disposed of whose names were not written in the book of life; and then the prophet proceeds, in the next chapter, to tell us, how they were disposed of whose names were found there written, viz., that they were admitted into the New Jerusalem. Ver. 27, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And yet in the next chapter it is implied, that some who were not truly gracious persons, and some that should finally perish, were visibly of the number of those that had both a part in the New Jerusalem, and also their names written in the book of life. Ver. 19, "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city."

8. That baptism, by which the primitive converts were admitted into the church, was used as an exhibition and token of their being visibly "regenerated, dead to sin, alive to God, having the old man crucified, being delivered from the reigning power of sin, being made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness, those servants of God that have their fruit unto that holiness whose end is everlasting life;" as it is evident by Rom. vi. throughout. In the former part of the chapter, he speaks of the Christian Romans, as "dead to sin, being buried with Christ in baptism, having their old man crucified with Christ," &c. He does not mean only, that their baptism laid them under special obligations to these things, and was a mark and token of their engagement to be thus hereafter; but was designed as a mark, token, and exhibition, of their being visibly thus already. As is most manifest by the apostle's prosecution of his argument in the following part of the chapter. Ver. 14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Ver. 17, 18, "God be thanked, ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from

the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Ver. 22, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

9. It is evident, that it is not only a visibility of moral sincerity in religion, which is the Scripture qualification of admission into the Christian church, but a visibility of regeneration and renovation of heart, because it was foretold that God's people and the ministers of his house in the days of the Messiah, should not admit into the Christian church any that were not visibly circumcised in heart. Ezek. xliv. 6—9, "And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God, O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations, in that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat, and the blood; and they have broken my covenant, because of all your abominations. And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things, but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves. Thus saith the Lord, No stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel."

The venerable author of the *Appeal to the Learned*, says, page 10, "That this Scripture has no particular reference to the Lord's supper." I answer, though I do not suppose it has merely a reference to that ordinance, yet I think it manifest, that it has a reference to admitting persons into the Christian church, and to external church privileges. It might be easy to prove, that these nine last chapters of Ezekiel must be a vision and prophecy of the state of things in the church of God in the Messiah's days. But I suppose it will not be denied, it being a thing wherein divines are so generally agreed. And I suppose, none will dispute but that by the house of God and his sanctuary, which it is here foretold the uncircumcised in heart should not be admitted into in the days of the gospel, is meant the same house, sanctuary, or temple of God, that the prophet had just before been speaking of, in the foregoing part of the same chapter, and been describing throughout the four preceding chapters. But we all know, that the New Testament house of God is his church. Heb. iii. 3, "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who builded the house, hath more honor than the house." Ver. 6, "But Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we," &c. 2 Tim. ii. 20, "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth," &c. 1 Tim. iii. 15, "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." Eph. ii. 20, 21, "And are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord." 1 Cor. iii. 9, "Ye are God's building." Ver. 15, "Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God?" 1 Pet. ii. 5, "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." Chap. iv. 17, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it begin at us, what shall the end be?" &c. Heb. x. 21, "And having a high priest over the house of God." Ezekiel's temple is doubtless the same that it is foretold the Messiah should build. Zech. vi. 12, 13, "The man whose name is the Branch—he shall build the temple of the Lord, even he shall build the temple of the Lord." And what the temple that Christ builds is, the apostle tells us, Heb. iii. 3, 6. The temple that Ezekiel in his vision was bid to observe the measures of, as it was measured with a reed (Ezek. xl. 3, 4), we have rea-

son to think, was the same the Apostle John in his vision was bid to measure with a reed, Rev. xi. 1. And when it is here foretold, that the uncircumcised in heart should not enter into the Christian sanctuary or church, nor have communion in the offerings of God's bread, of the fat and blood, that were made there, I think so much is at least implied, that they should not have communion in those ordinances of the Christian sanctuary, in which that body and blood of Christ were symbolically represented, which used of old to be symbolically represented by the fat and the blood. For the admission into the Christian church here spoken of, is an admission into the visible, and not the mystical church; for such an admission is spoken of as is made by the officers of the church. And I suppose it will not be doubted, but that by circumcision of heart is meant the spiritual renewing of the heart; not any common virtues, which do not in the least change the nature, and mortify the corruption of the heart; as is held by all orthodox divines, and as Mr Stoddard in particular abundantly insisted. However, if any body disputes it, I desire that the Scripture may be allowed to speak for itself; for it very often speaks of circumcision of heart; and this everywhere, both in the Old Testament and New, manifestly signifies that great change of heart that was typified by the ceremony of circumcision of the flesh. The same which afterwards was signified by baptism, viz., regeneration, or else the progress of that work in sanctification; as we read of the washing of regeneration, &c. The apostle tells us what was signified both by circumcision and baptism, Col. ii. 11, 12: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism; wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God." Where I would observe by the way, he speaks of all the members of the church of Colosse as visibly circumcised with this circumcision; agreeably to Ezekiel's prophecy, that the members of the Christian church shall visibly have this circumcision. The apostle speaks in like manner, of the members of the church of Philippi as spiritually circumcised (i. e. in profession and visibility), and tells wherein this circumcision appeared. Philip. iii. 3, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. And in Rom. ii. 28, 29, the apostle speaks of this Christian circumcision and Jewish circumcision together, calling the former the circumcision of the heart: "But he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the FLESH; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of *the heart*, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." And whereas in this prophecy of Ezekiel it is foretold, that none should enter into the Christian sanctuary or church, but such as are circumcised in heart and circumcised in flesh; thereby I suppose is intended, that none should be admitted but such as were visibly regenerated, and also baptized with outward baptism.

By the things which have been observed, I think it abundantly evident, that the saintship, godliness, and holiness, of which, according to Scripture, professing Christians and visible saints do make a profession and have a visibility, is not any religion and virtue that is the result of common grace, or moral sincerity (as it is called), but saving grace. Yet there are many other clear evidences of the same thing, which may in some measure appear in all the following part of this discourse. Wherefore,

II. I come now to another reason, why I answer the question at first proposed, in the negative, viz., that it is a duty which in an ordinary state of things is required of all that are capable of it, to make an explicit open profession of

the true religion, by owning God's covenant; or, in other words, professedly and verbally to unite themselves to God in his covenant, by their own public act.

Here I would (first) prove this point, and then (secondly) draw the consequence, and show how this demonstrates the thing in debate.

First.—I shall endeavor to establish this point, viz., that it is the duty of God's people thus publicly to own the covenant; and that it was not only a duty in Israel of old, but is so in the Christian church, and to the end of the world; and that it is a duty required of adult persons before they come to sacraments. And this being a point of great consequence in this controversy, but a matter seldom handled (though it seems to be generally taken for granted), I shall be the more particular in the consideration of it.

This not only seems to be in itself most consonant to reason, and is a duty generally allowed in New England, but is evidently a great institution of the word of God, appointed as a very important part of that public religion by which God's people should give honor to his name. This institution we have in Deut. vi. 13: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name." It is repeated, chap. x. 20, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name." In both places it might have been rendered; thou shalt swear in his name, or into his name. In the original, *bishmo*, the prefix is *beth*, which signifies in or into, as well as by. And whereas, in the latter place, in our translation, it is said, to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name, the words are thus in the Hebrew, *ubho thidhbak ubhishmo tisshabheang*. The literal translation of which is, into him shalt thou cleave [or unite], and into his name shalt thou swear. There is the same prefix, *beth*, before him, when it is said, thou shalt cleave to him, as before his name, when it is said, thou shalt swear by his name. Swearing into God's name, is a very emphatical and significant way of expressing a person's taking on himself, by his own solemn profession, the name of God, as one of his people; or by swearing to or covenanting with God, uniting himself by his own act to the people that is called by his name. The figure of speech is something like that by which Christians in the New Testament are said to be baptized εις το ονομα, into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. So Christians are said to be baptized into Christ, Gal. iii. 17. This swearing by the name, or into the name of the Lord is so often, and in such a manner spoken of by the prophets as a great duty of God's solemn public worship, as much as praying or sacrificing, that it would be unreasonable to understand it only, or chiefly, of occasionally taking an oath before a court of judicature, which, it may be, one tenth part of the people never had occasion to do once in their lives. If we well consider the matter, we shall see abundant reason to be satisfied, that the thing intended in this institution was publicly covenanting with God. Covenanting in Scripture is very often called by the name of swearing, and a covenant is called an oath.* And particularly God's covenant is called his oath: Deut. xxix. 12, "That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath." Ver. 14, "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath." 1 Chron. xvi. 15, 16, "Be ye mindful always of his covenant: even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac." 2 Chron. xv. 12, "And they entered into covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers." Verses 14, 15, "And they sware unto the

* As Gen. xxi. 23, to the end, xxvi. 28, to the end, xxxi. 44, 53; Josh. ii. 12, &c.; 1 Sam. xx. 16, 17 42; 2 Kings xi. 4; Eccl. viii. 2; Ezek. xvi. 59, xvii. 16, and many other places.

Lord with a loud voice: and all Judah rejoiced at the oath." Swearing to the Lord, or swearing in, or into the name of the Lord, are equipollent expressions in the Bible. The prefixes *beth* and *lamed* are evidently used indifferently in this case to signify the same thing. Zeph. i. 5, "That swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham." The word translated *to the Lord*, is, *Laihovah*, with the prefix *lamed;* but *to Malcham* is *Bemalcham* with the prefix *beth*, *into Malcham*. In 1 Kings xviii. 32, it is said, "Elijah built an altar in the name of the Lord;" *beshem*. Here the prefix *beth* is manifestly of the same force with *lamed*, in 1 Kings viii. 44, "The house I have built for thy name or to thy name;" *leshem*.

God's people in swearing to his name, or into his name, according to the institution, solemnly professed two things, viz., their faith and obedience. The former part of this profession of religion was called, Saying, the Lord liveth. Jer. v. 2, "And though they say, the Lord liveth, yet surely they swear falsely." Ver. 7, "They have sworn by them that are no gods:" that is, they had openly professed idol worship. Chap. iv. 2, "Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory." (Compare this with Isa. xlv. 23, 24, 25.) Jer. xliv. 26, "Behold I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, the Lord liveth:" i. e., they shall never any more make any profession of the true God, and of the true religion, but shall be wholly given up to Heathenism. See also Jer. xii. 16, and xvi. 14, 15, and xxiii. 7, 8, Hos. iv. 15, Amos viii. 14, and ver. 5.

These words CHAI JEHOVAH, Jehovah liveth, summarily comprehended a profession of faith in that all-sufficiency and immutability of God, which is implied in the name JEHOVAH, and which attributes are very often signified in the Scripture by God's being the LIVING GOD, as is very manifest from Josh. iii. 10, 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36, 2 Kings xix. 4, 16, Dan. vi. 26, Psal. xviii. 46, and innumerable other places.

The other thing professed in swearing into the Lord was obedience, called, Walking in the name of the Lord. Micah iv. 5, "All people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever." Still with the prefix *beth*, *beshem*, as they were said to swear *beshem*, in the name, or into the name of the Lord.

This institution, in Deuteronomy, of swearing into the name of the Lord, or visibly and explicitly uniting themselves to him in covenant, was not prescribed as an extraordinary duty, or a duty to be performed on a return from a general apostasy, and some other extraordinary occasions: but is evidently mentioned in the institution, as a part of the public worship of God to be performed by all God's people, properly belonging to the visible worshippers of Jehovah; and so it is very often mentioned by the prophets, as I observed before, and could largely demonstrate, if there was occasion for it, and would not too much lengthen out this discourse.

And this was not only an institution belonging to Israel under the Old Testament, but also to Gentile converts, and Christians under the New Testament. Thus God declares concerning the Gentile nations, Jer. xii. 16: "If they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, the Lord liveth, as they taught my people to swear by Baal: then shall they be built in the midst of my people:" i. e., they shall be added to my church; or as the Apostle Paul expresses it, Eph. iii. 19—22, "They shall be no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and be built

upon the foundation of Christ; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, &c. In whom they also shall be builded for a habitation of God through the Spirit." So it is foretold, that the way of public covenanting should be in the way of the Gentiles joining themselves to the church in the days of the gospel: Isa. xliv. 3. 4, 5, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses; one shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord." As subscribing an instrument whereby they bound themselves to the Lord. This was subscribing and covenanting themselves into the name of Israel, and swearing into the name of the Lord, in the language of those forementioned texts in Deuteronomy. So taking hold of God's covenant, is foretold as the way in which the sons of the strangers in the days of the gospel should be joined to God's church, and brought into God's sanctuary, and to have communion in his worship and ordinances, in Isa. lvi. 3, 6, 7. So in Isa. xix. 18, the future conversion of the Gentiles in the days of the gospel, and their being brought to profess the true religion, is expressed by that, that they should swear to the Lord of Hosts. "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of Hosts." So in Jer. xxiii. 5—8, it seems to be plainly foretold, that after Christ is come, and has wrought out his great redemption, the same way of publicly professing faith in the all-sufficient and immutable God, by swearing, the Lord liveth, should be continued, which was instituted of old; but only with this difference, and whereas formerly they covenanted with God as their Redeemer out of Egypt, now they shall as it were forget that work, and have a special respect to a much greater redemption. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch. Therefore they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country," &c. Another remarkable place wherein it is plainly foretold, that the like method of professing religion should be continued in the days of the gospel, which was instituted in Israel, by swearing or public covenanting, is that, Isa. xlv. 22—25, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else; I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear: surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come: in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." This prophecy will have its last fulfilment at the day of judgment; but it is plain, that the thing most directly intended is the conversion of the Gentile world to the Christian religion. What is here called swearing, the apostle, in citing this place, once and again calls confessing: Rom. xiv. 11, "Every tongue shall confess to God." Philip. ii. 10, "That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Which is the word commonly used in the New Testament, to signify making a public profession of religion. So Rom. x. 9, 10, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Where a public profession of religion with the mouth is evidently spoken of as a great duty of all Christ's people, as well as believing in him; and ordinarily requisite to salvation; not that it is necessary in the same man-

ner that faith is, but in like manner as baptism is. Faith and verbal profession are jointly spoken of here as necessary to salvation, in the same manner as faith and baptism are, in Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." And I know no good reason why we should not look on oral profession and covenanting with Christ, in those who are capable of it, as much of a stated duty in the Christian church, and an institution universally pertaining to the followers of Christ, as much as baptism.

And if it be so that explicit open covenanting with God be a great duty required of all, as has been represented; then it ought to be expected of persons before they are admitted to the privileges of the adult in the church of Christ. Surely it is proper, if this explicit covenanting take place at all, that it should take place before persons come to those ordinances wherein they, by their own act, publicly confirm and seal this covenant. This public transaction of covenanting, which God has appointed, ought to be, or have an existence, before we publicly confirm and seal this transaction. It was that by which the Israelites of old were introduced into the communion of God's nominal or visible church and holy city, as appears by Isa. xlviii. 1, 2: "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness: for they call themselves of the holy city," &c. When and after what manner particularly the Israelites ordinarily performed this explicit covenanting, I do not know that we can be certain; but as it was first done on occasion of God's first promulgating his law or covenant at Mount Sinai, and was done again on occasion of a repetition or renewed promulgation of it on the plains of Moab, and was done on occasion of the public reading of the law in Josiah's time (2 Kings xxiii. 3), and was done after the return from the captivity, on occasion of the public reading of it at the feast of tabernacles (Neh. viii. ix. and x.), so it appears to me most likely, that it was done every seventh year, when the law or covenant of God was, by divine appointment, read in the audience of all the people at the feast of tabernacles; at least done then by all who then heard the law read the first time, and who never had heard, nor publicly owned the covenant of God before. There are good evidences that they never had communion in those ordinances which God had appointed as seals of his covenant, wherein they themselves were to be active, such as their sacrifices, &c., until they had done it: it is plainly implied in Psal. l., that it was the manner in Israel vocally to own God's covenant, or to take it into their mouths, before they sealed that covenant in their sacrifices. See ver. 16, taken with the preceding part of the Psalm, from verse 5. And that they did it before they partook of the passover (which indeed was one of their sacrifices), or entered into the sanctuary for communion in the temple worship, is confirmed by the words of Hezekiah, when he proclaimed a passover, 2 Chron. xxx. 8: "Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves unto the Lord (in the Hebrew, give the hand to the Lord), and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified forever, and serve the Lord your God." To give the hand, seems to be a Hebrew phrase for entering into covenant, or obliging themselves by covenant: Ezra x. 19, "And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives." And, as has been already observed, it was foretold that Christians should in this way be admitted to communion in the privileges of the church of Christ.

Having thus established the premises of the argument I intend, I now come,

Secondly, To that which I think must be the consequence, viz., that none ought to be admitted to the privileges of adult persons in the church of Christ

but such as make a profession of real piety. For the covenant, to be owned or professed, is God's covenant, which he has revealed as the method of our spiritual union with him, and our acceptance as the objects of his eternal favor: which is no other than the covenant of grace; at least it is so, without dispute, in these days of the gospel. To own this covenant, is to profess the consent of our hearts to it; and that is the sum and substance of true piety. It is not only a professing the assent of our understandings, that we understand there is such a covenant, or that we understand we are obliged to comply with it; but it is to profess the consent of our wills, it is to manifest that we do comply with it. There is mutual profession in this affair, a profession on Christ's part, and a profession on our part; as it is in marriage. And it is the same sort of profession that is made on both sides, in this respect, that each professes a consent of heart. Christ in his word declares an entire consent of heart as to what he offers; and the visible Christian, in the answer that he makes to it in his Christian profession, declares a consent and compliance of heart to his proposal. Owning the covenant is professing to make the transaction of that covenant our own. The transaction of that covenant is that of espousals to Christ; on our part, it is giving our souls to Christ as his spouse. There is no one thing that the covenant of grace is so often compared to in Scripture, as the marriage covenant; and the visible transaction, or mutual profession there is between Christ and the visible church, is abundantly compared to the mutual profession there is in marriage. In marriage the bride professes to yield to the bridegroom's suit, and to take him for her husband, renouncing all others, and to give up herself to him to be entirely and forever possessed by him as his wife. But he that professes this towards Christ, professes saving faith. They that openly covenanted with God according to the tenor of the institution, Deut. x. 20, visibly united themselves to God in the union of that covenant; they professed on their parts the union of the covenant of God, which was the covenant of grace. It is said in the institution, "Thou shalt cleave to the Lord, and swear by his name;" or as the words more literally are, "Thou shalt unite unto the Lord, and swear into his name." So in Isa. lvi. it is called a "joining themselves to the Lord." But the union, cleaving, or joining of that covenant is saving faith, the grand condition of the covenant of Christ, by which we are in Christ: this is what brings us into the Lord. For a person explicitly or professedly to enter into the union or relation of the covenant of grace with Christ, is the same as professedly to do that which on our part is the uniting act, and that is the act of faith. To profess the covenant of grace, is to profess the covenant, not as a spectator, but as one immediately concerned in the affair, as a party in the covenant professed; and this is to profess that in the covenant which belongs to us as a party, or to profess our part in the covenant; and that is the soul's believing acceptance of the Saviour. Christ's part is salvation, our part is a saving faith in him; not a feigned, but unfeigned faith; not a common, but special and saving faith; no other faith than this is the condition of the covenant of grace.

I know the distinction that is made by some, between the internal and external covenant; but, I hope, the divines that make this distinction, would not be understood, that there are really and properly two covenants of grace; but only that those who profess the one only covenant of grace, are of two sorts; there are those who comply with it internally and really, and others who do so only externally, that is, in profession and visibility. But he that externally and visibly complies with the covenant of grace, appears and professes to do so really. This distinction takes place also concerning the covenant of grace:

the one only covenant of grace is exhibited two ways, the one externally by the preaching of the word, the other internally and spiritually by enlightening the mind rightly to understand the word. But it is with the covenant, as it is with the call of the gospel: he that really complies with the external call, has the internal call; so he that truly complies with the external proposal of God's covenant, as visible Christians profess to do, does indeed perform the inward condition of it. But the New Testament affords no more foundation for supposing two real and properly distinct covenants of grace, than it does to suppose two sorts of real Christians; the unscripturalness of which latter hypothesis I observed before.

When those persons who were baptized in infancy do properly own their baptismal covenant, the meaning of it is, that they now, being become capable to act for themselves, do professedly and explicitly make their parents' act, in giving them up to God, their own, by expressly giving themselves up to God. But this no person can do, without either being deceived, or dissembling and professing what he himself supposes to be a falsehood, unless he supposes that he in his heart consents to be God's. A child of Christian parents never does that for himself which his parents did for him in infancy, until he gives himself wholly to God. But surely *he* does not do it, who not only keeps back a part, but the chief part, his heart and soul. He that keeps back his heart, does in in effect keep back all; and therefore, if he be sensible of it, is guilty of solemn wilful mockery, if he at the same time solemnly and publicly professes that he gives himself up to God. If there are any words used by such, which in their proper signification imply that they give themselves up to God; and if these words, as they intend them to be understood, and as they are understood by those that hear them, according to their established use and custom among that people, do not imply, that they do it really, but do truly reserve or keep back the chief part; it ceases to be a profession of giving themselves up to God, and so ceases to be a professed covenanting with God, or owning God's covenant; for the thing which they profess, belongs to no covenant of God, in being; for God has revealed no such covenant, nor has any such covenant of God any existence, in which our transacting of the covenant is a giving up ourselves to him with reserve, or holding back a part, especially holding back our souls, our chief part, and in effect our all. There is no covenant of God at all, that has these for its terms; to be sure, this is not the covenant of grace. And therefore although such public and solemn professing may be a very unwarrantable and great abuse of words, and taking God's name in vain, it is no professed covenanting with God.

One thing, as has been observed, that belonged to Israel's swearing into the name of the Lord, was *the Lord liveth;* whereby they professed their faith in God's all-sufficiency, immutability and faithfulness. But if they really had such a faith, it was a saving grace. They who indeed trust in the all-sufficiency of God, he will surely be their all-sufficient portion; and they who trust in God's immutability and faithfulness, he surely will never leave nor forsake them. There were two ways of swearing *Jehovah liveth*, that we read of in Scripture; one we read of, Jer. iv. 2, "Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness:" and the other way is swearing falsely, which we read of in the next chapter, ver. 2, 3, "And though they say, The Lord liveth, yet surely they swear falsely." (And certainly none ought to do this.) It follows, "O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?" i. e., God desires sincerity of heart in those that profess religion. Here a gracious sincerity is opposed to a false profession; for when it is said, "O Lord, are not thine

eyes upon the truth?" the expression is parallel with those, Psal li. 6, "Behold thou desirest the truth in the inward parts." 1 Sam. xvi. 7, "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Psal. xi 7, "His countenance doth behold the upright." But these texts speak of a gracious sincerity. Those spoken of, Jer. iv. 2, that "sware, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and righteousness," were gracious persons, who had a thorough conversion to God, as appears by the preceding verse, "If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me;" i. e., Do not do as you or Judah was charged with doing in the foregoing chapter, ver. 10, "Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly." Do not do thus, "but if thou wilt return, return unto me." And then it is added in the second verse, "And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth," &c., that is, then your profession of religion will be worth regarding, you will be indeed what you pretend to be, you will be Israelites indeed, in whose profession is no guile. They who said, "The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness;" they said, the Lord liveth, as David did, Psal. xviii. 46, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock." And did as the apostle says he did, 1 Tim. iv. 10, "We trust in the LIVING GOD, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." And as he would have Timothy exhort rich men to do, chap. vi. 17, "That they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God." When the apostle speaks of a profession of our faith in Christ, as one duty which all Christians ought to perform as they seek salvation, it is the profession of a saving faith that he speaks of: his words plainly imply it; "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The faith which was to be professed with the mouth, was the same which the apostle speaks of as in the heart, but that is saving faith. The latter is yet plainer in the following words: "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Believing unto righteousness is saving faith; but it is evidently the same faith which is spoken of, as professed with the mouth, in the next words in the same sentence. And that the Gentiles, in professing the Christian religion, or swearing to Christ, should profess saving faith, is implied, Isa. xlv. 23, 24, "Every tongue shall swear: surely shall one say In the Lord have I righteousness and strength;" i. e., should profess entirely to depend on Christ's righteousness and strength.

For persons merely to promise, that they *will* believe in Christ, or that they *will hereafter* comply with the conditions and duties of the covenant of grace, is not to own that covenant. Such persons do not profess *now* to enter into the covenant of grace with Christ, or into the relation of that covenant to Christ. All that they do at present, is only a speaking fair; they say they will do it hereafter; they profess that they will hereafter obey that command of God, to believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. But what is such a profession good for, and what credit is to be given to such promises of future obedience; when at the same time they pretend no other at present, than to live and continue in rebellion against those great commands which give no allowance or license for delay? They who do thus, instead of properly owning the covenant, do rather for the present visibly reject it. It is not unusual, in some churches, where the doctrine I oppose has been established, for persons at the same time that they come into the church, and pretend to own the covenant, freely to declare to their neighbors, they have no imagination that they have any true faith in Christ, or love to him. Such persons, instead of being professedly united to Christ, in the union of the covenant of grace, are rather visibly destitute

of the love of Christ, and so, instead of being qualified for admission to the Lord's supper, are rather exposed to that denunciation of the apostle, 1 Cor. xvi. 22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha."

That outward covenanting, which is agreeable to Scripture institution, is not only a promising what is future (though that is not excluded), but a professing what is present, as it is in the marriage covenant. (Though indeed it is true, that it was chiefly on account of the promise or vow which there is in the covenant, that it is called swearing.) For a woman to promise, that she will hereafter renounce all other men for the sake of him who makes suit to her, and will in some future time accept of him for her husband, is not for her now to enter into the marriage covenant with him: she that does this with a man, professes now to accept of him, renouncing all others; though promises of hereafter behaving towards him as a wife, are also included in the transaction. It seems as though the primitive converts to Christianity, in the profession they made of religion, in order to their admission into the Christian church, and in their visibly entering into covenant, in order to the initiating seal of the covenant in baptism, did not explicitly make any promises of any thing future, they only professed the present sentiments and habit of their minds, they professed that they believed in Christ, and so were admitted into the church by baptism; and yet undoubtedly they were, according to forementioned prophecies, admitted in the way of public covenanting, and as the covenant people of God they owned the covenant before the seal of the covenant was applied. Their professing faith in Christ was visibly owning the covenant of grace, because faith in Christ was the grand condition of that covenant. Indeed, if the faith which they professed in order to baptism, was only an historical or doctrinal faith (as some suppose), or any common faith, it would not have been any visible entering into the covenant of grace; for a common faith is not the condition of that covenant; nor would there properly have been any covenanting in the case. If we suppose, the faith they professed was the grace by which the soul is united to Christ, their profession was a covenanting in this respect also, that it implied an engagement of future obedience: for true faith in Christ includes in its nature an acceptance of him as our Lord and King, and devoting ourselves to his service: but a profession of historical faith implies no profession of accepting Christ as our King, nor engagement to submit to him as such.

When the Israelites publicly covenanted with God, according to the institution in Deuteronomy, they did not only promise something future, but professed something present; they avouched Jehovah to be their God, and also promised to keep his command. Thus it was in their solemn covenant transactions between God and the people on the plains of Moab, which is summarily described, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18: "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments." The people, in avouching God for their God, professed a compliance with the terms of the covenant of grace; as the covenant of grace is summarily expressed in those words, "I will be thy God, and thou shalt be my people." They that avouch the Lord to be their God, do profess to accept of Jehovah as their God; and that is to accept him as the object of their supreme respect and trust. For that which we choose as the object of our highest regard, that, and that only, do we take as our God. None therefore that value and love the world more than Jehovah,

can, without lying, or being deceived, avouch Jehovah to be their God: and none that do not trust in Christ, but trust more in their own strength or righteousness, can avouch Christ to be their Saviour. To avouch God to be our God, is to profess that he is our God by our own act; i. e., that we choose him to be our chief good and last end, the supreme object of our esteem and regard, that we devote ourselves to, and depend upon. And if we are sensible that we do not this sincerely, we cannot profess that we actually do it; for he that does not do it sincerely, does not do it at all: there is no room for the distinction of a moral sincerity and gracious sincerity in this case: a supreme respect of heart to God, or a supreme love to him, which is real, is but of one sort: it would be absurd, to talk of a morally sincere supreme love to God in those who really love dirt and dung more than him. Whoever does with any reality at all make God the object of the supreme regard of his heart, is certainly a gracious person. And whoever does not make God the supreme object of his respect with a gracious sincerity, certainly does not do it with any sincerity. I fear, while leading people in many of our congregations, who have no thought of their having the least spark of true love to God in their hearts, do say, publicly and solemnly, that they avouch God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be their God, and that they give themselves up to him, we have led them to say they know not what. To be sure, they are very obscure expressions, if they mean any thing that a carnal man does, under the reigning power of sin and enmity against God.

Here possibly it may be objected, that it is unreasonable to suppose any such thing should be intended, in the profession of the congregation in the wilderness, as a gracious respect to God, that which is the condition of God's covenant, when we have reason to think that so few of them were truly gracious. But I suppose, upon mature consideration this will not appear at all unreasonable. It is no more unreasonable to suppose this people to make a profession of that respect to God, which they had not in their hearts now, than at other times when we are informed they did so, as in Ezek. xxxiii. 31: "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people" [i. e. as though they were my saints, as they profess to be]: "for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness." So in the apostle's time, that people professed that to be in their hearts towards God, which was not there. The apostle is speaking of them, when he says, Tit. i. 16, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him." This was common among that people: God declares them to be an hypocritical nation, Isa. x. 6. And it is certain, this was the case with them in the wilderness; they there professed that respect to God which they had not; as is evident by Psal. lxviii. 36, 37: "They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant." In owning the covenant with God, they professed their heart was right with him, as appears, because it is mentioned as an evidence of their having lied or dealt falsely in their profession, that their heart was not right with him, and so proved not steadfast in God's covenant, which they had owned. If their heart had been right with God, they would have been truly pious persons; which is a demonstration, that what they professed was true piety. It also appears that if they had had such a heart in them as they pretended to have, they would have been truly pious persons, from Deut. v., where we have a rehearsal of their covenanting at Mount Sinai. Concerning this it is said, ver. 28, 29, "And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, They have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such a heart in them, that they

would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children forever." The people were mistaken about their disposition and preparation of heart to go through the business of God's service, as the man in the parable, that undertook to build a tower without counting the cost. Nor need it seem at all incredible, that that generation who covenanted at Mount Sinai, should, the greater part of them, be deceived, and think their hearts thoroughly disposed to give up themselves forever to God, if we consider how much they had strongly to move their affections; the wonders wrought in Egypt and at the Red Sea, where they were led through on dry ground, and the Egyptians were so miraculously destroyed; whereby their affections were greatly raised, and they sang God's praises: and particularly what they now saw at Mount Sinai, of the astonishing manifestations of God's majesty there. Probably the greater part of the sinners among them were deceived with false affections: and if there were others that were less affected and who were not deceived, it is not incredible that they, in those circumstances, should wilfully dissemble in their profession, and so in a more gross sense flatter God with their lips, and lie to him with their tongues. And these things are more credible concerning that generation, being a generation peculiarly left to hardness and blindness of mind in divine matters, and peculiarly noted in the Book of Psalms for hypocrisy. And as to the generation of their children that owned the covenant on the plains of Moab, they not only in like manner had very much to move their affections, the awful judgments of God they had seen on their fathers, God having brought them through the wilderness, and subdued Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan before them, Moses's affecting rehearsal of the whole series of God's wonderful dealings with them, together with his most pathetical exhortations; but it was also a time of great revival of religion and powerful influence of the Spirit of God, and that generation was probably the most excellent generation that ever was in Israel; to be sure, there is more good and less hurt spoken of them, than of any other generation that we have any account of in Scripture.* A very great part of them swore in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness: and no wonder, that others at such a time fell in, either deceiving, or being deceived, with common affections; as is usual in times of great works of God for his church, and of the flourishing of religion. In succeeding generations, as the people grew more corrupt, I suppose, their covenanting or swearing into the name of the Lord degenerated into a matter of mere form and ceremony; even as subscribing religious articles seems to have done with the church of England; and, as it is to be feared, owning the covenant, as it is called, has too much done in New-England; it being visibly a prevailing custom for persons to neglect this, until they come to be married, and then to do it for their credit's sake, and that their children may be baptized. And I suppose, there was commonly a great laxness in Israel among the priests who had the conduct of this affair: and there were many things in the nature of that comparatively carnal dispensation, which negatively gave occasion for such things; that is, whereby it had by no means so great a tendency to prevent such like irregularities, though very wrong in themselves, as the more excellent dispensation, introduced by Christ and his apostles. And though these things were testified against by the Prophets, before the Babylonish captivity; yet God who is only wise, hid designedly in a great measure wink at these, and many other great irregu-

* See Numb. xiv. 31. Deut. i. 39. and viii. 15, 16. Josh. xxii. 2, and verse 11, to the end, and xxiii. 5. Deut. iv. 4. Josh. xxiv 31. Judg. ii. 17. 22. Psal. lxviii. 14. Jer. ii. 2 3. 21, and xxxi. 2, 3. Hos. x. 10

larities in the church until the time of reformation should come, which the Messiah was to have the honor of introducing. But of these things I may perhaps have occasion to say something more, when I come to answer the objection concerning the passover.

Now to return to the argument from the nature of covenanting with God, or owning God's covenant: as to the promises, which are herein either explicitly or implicitly made; the making these promises implies a profession of true piety. For in the covenant of grace universal obedience is engaged, obedience to all the commands of God; and the performance of inward spiritual duties is as much engaged in the covenant of grace, as external duties; and in some respects much more. Therefore he that visibly makes the covenant of grace his own promises to perform those internal duties, and to perform all duties with a gracious sincerity. We have no warrant, in our profession of God's covenant, to divide the duties of it, to take some, and leave out others: especially have we not warrant to leave out those great commands, of believing with the heart, of loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our souls, and our neighbor as ourselves. He that leaves out these, in effect leaves out all; for these are the sum of our whole duty, and of all God's commands: if we leave these out of our profession, surely it is not the covenant of grace, which we profess. The Israelites when they covenanted with God at Mount Sinai, and said, when God had declared to them the ten commandments, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient;" their promise implied, that as they professed to know God, they would in works not deny, but own and honor him, and would conform to those two great commandments, which are the sum of all the ten, and concerning which God said, "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart," Deut. vi. 6. So, when they covenanted on the plains of Moab, they promised to keep and do God's commands, "with all their heart, and with all their soul," as is very evident by Deut. xxvi. 16, 17. So it was also when the people owned their covenant in Asa's time, 2 Chron, xv. 12: "They entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul." We have also another remarkable instance, 2 Kings xxiii. 3, and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31.

Now he who is wholly under the power of a carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, cannot promise these things without either great deceit, or the most manifest and palpable absurdity. Promising supposes the person to be conscious to himself, or persuaded of himself, that he has such a heart in him; for his lips pretend to declare his heart. The nature of a promise implies intention or design. And proper real intention implies will, disposition, and compliance of heart. But no natural man is properly willing to do these duties, nor does his heart comply with them; and to make natural men believe otherwise, tends greatly to their hurt. A natural man may be willing, from self-love, and from sinister views, to use means and take pains that he may obtain a willingness or disposition to these duties: but that is a very different thing from actually being willing, or truly having a disposition to them. So he may promise, that he will, from some consideration or other, take great pains to obtain such a heart: but if he does so, this is not the promise of the covenant of grace. Men may make many religious promises to God and many promises some way relating to the covenant of grace, that are not themselves the promises of that covenant; nor is there any thing of the nature of covenanting in the case, because, although they should actually fulfil their promises, God is not obliged by promise to them. If a natural man promises to do all that it is possible for a natural man to do in religion, and fulfils

his promises, God is not obliged, by any covenant that he has entered into with man, to perform any thing at all for him, respecting his saving benefits. And therefore he that promises these things only, enters into no covenant with God; because the very notion of entering into covenant with any being, is entering into a mutual agreement, doing or engaging that which, if done, the other party becomes engaged on his part. The New Testament informs us but of one covenant God enters into with mankind through Christ, and that is the covenant of grace; in which God obliges himself to nothing in us that is exclusive of unfeigned faith, and the spiritual duties that attend it: therefore if a natural man makes ever so many vows, that he will perform all external duties, and will pray for help to do spiritual duties, and for an ability and will to comply with the covenant of grace, from such principles as he has, he does not lay hold of God's covenant, nor properly enter into any covenant with God: for we have no opportunity to covenant with God in any other covenant, than that which he has revealed; he becomes a covenant party in no other covenant. It is true, every natural man that lives under the gospel, is obliged to comply with the terms of the covenant of grace; and if he promises to do it, his promise may increase his obligation, though he flattered God with his mouth, and lied to him with his tongue, as the children of Israel did in promising. But it will not thence follow, that they ought knowingly to make a lying promise, or that ministers and churches should countenance them in so doing.

Indeed there is no natural man but what deceives himself, if he thinks he is truly willing to perform external obedience to God, universally and perseveringly through the various trials of life that he may expect. And therefore in promising it, he is either very deceitful, or is like the foolish deceived man that undertook to build when he had not wherewith to finish. And if it be known by the church, before whom he promises to build and finish, that at the same time he does not pretend to have a heart to finish, his promise is worthy of no credit or regard from them, and can make nothing visible to them but his presumption.

A great confirmation of what has been said under this head of covenanting, is that text, Psa. l. 16, "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" This term, *the wicked*, in the more general use of it in Scripture, is applied in that extent as to include all ungodly or graceless persons, all that are under the reigning power of sin, and are the objects of God's anger, or exposed to his eternal vengeance; as might easily be made to appear by a particular enumeration of texts all over the Bible. All such are in Scripture called, "workers of iniquity, the children of the wicked one," Matt. xiii. 38. All such are said to be of the devil, 1 John iii. 8. And to be the children of the devil, verse 10. The righteous and the wicked are in a multitude of places in Scripture put in opposition; and they are evidently opposed one to the other, and distinguished one from another in Scripture, as saints and sinners, holy and unholy, those that fear God and those that fear him not, those that love him and those that hate him. All mankind are in Scripture divided by these distinctions, and the Bible knows of no neuters or third sort. Indeed those who are really wicked, may be visibly righteous, righteous in profession and outward appearance: but a sort of men who have no saving grace, that yet are not really wicked men, are a sort of men of human invention, that the Scripture is entirely ignorant of. It is reasonable to suppose, that by wicked men here, in this psalm, is meant all that hate instruction, and reject God's word (Psal. l. 17), and not merely such wicked men as are guilty of those particular crimes mentioned, ver. 17—20, stealing

adultery, fraud, and backbiting. Though only some particular ways of wickedness are mentioned, yet we are not to understand that all others are excluded; yea the words, in the conclusion of the paragraph, are expressly applied to all that forget God in such a manner as to expose themselves to be torn in pieces by his wrath in hell, ver. 22: "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." We can no more justly argue, that because some gross sins are here specified, that no sinners are meant but such as live in those or other gross sins, than we can argue from Rev. xxii. 14, 15, that none shall be shut out of heaven but only those who have lived in the gross sins there mentioned: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city: for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Nothing is more common in Scripture, than in the descriptions it gives, both of the godly and ungodly, together with their general character, to insert into the description some particular excellent practices of the one which grace tends to, and some certain gross sins of the other which there is a foundation for in the reigning corruption in their hearts. So, lying is mentioned as part of the character of all natural men, Psal. lviii. 3, 4 (who are there called wicked men, as in Psal. l): "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies: their poison is like the poison of a serpent," &c. So it is said of the wicked, Psal. x. 2, 3, 4, 7, "His mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." This the apostle, Rom. iii., cites as a description of all natural men. So it is said of the wicked, Psal. cxl. 3, "They have sharpened their tongues as a serpent; adder's poison is under their lips;" which the same apostle, in the same place, also cites as what is said of all natural men. The very same gross sins which are here mentioned in the fiftieth Psalm, are from time to time inserted in Solomon's descriptions of the wicked man, as opposed to the righteous, in the book of Proverbs: particularly the sins mentioned in the 19th verse of that psalm, "Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit," are thus mentioned, as belonging to the character of the wicked man: Prov. xii. 5, 6, "The thoughts of the righteous are right; but the counsels of the wicked are deceit. The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood; but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them." Nevertheless it is plain, that the wise man in his book, in his distinction of the righteous and the wicked, means the same as godly and ungodly. Only reading the two foregoing chapters will be enough to satisfy any of this. Observe chap. x. 3, 7, 16, 20, 21, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and xi. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 30, 31, besides innumerable other like texts all over the book. In chap. i. 16, it is said of sinners, "Their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood." This the apostle, in Romans iii. 15, cites as belonging to the description of all natural men. So in the description of the wicked, Prov. iv. 14—19, it is said, that "they sleep not unless they have done mischief; that they drink the wine of violence," &c., and yet by the wicked there is meant the same with the graceless man; as appears by the antithesis, there made between him and the "just or righteous, whose path is as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day."

As a further evidence that by the wicked in this Psalm l. 16, is meant the same as the ungodly or graceless, it is to be observed, here is a pretty manifest antithesis, or opposition between the wicked and the saints, that shall be gathered to Christ at the day of judgment, spoken of verse 5. There God, speaking of his coming to judgment, says, "Gather my saints together, those that have

made a covenant with me by sacrifice:" and then, after showing the insufficiency of the sacrifices of beasts, implying that that is a greater sacrifice by which these saints make a covenant with him, it is added, "But to the wicked" [that are not in the number of my saints] "God doth say, What hast thou to do, to take my covenant into thy mouth?" Approving of the covenanting of the former, but disapproving the covenanting of the latter. As to the gathering of God's saints, there spoken, if we consider the foregoing and following verses, it is evidently the same with that gathering of his elect, when Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, which is spoken of, Matt. xxiv. 30, 31; and with that gathering of the righteous, as his wheat into his barn, at the day of judgment, spoken of Matt. xiii. And therefore there is as much reason to suppose, that by the wicked, which are opposed to them, is meant all graceless persons, as there is so to understand the doers of iniquity, spoken of in that Matt. xiii., as those that are opposed to the righteous, which shall then "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," ver. 43. And there is one thing more which still further confirms me in my construction of Psal. l. 16, which is, that the plain reason here given against wicked men's taking God's covenant into their mouths, holds good with respect to all graceless men, viz., because they do not comply with, but reject the very covenant, which they with their mouths profess to own and consent to. Ver. 17, "Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee:" as much as to say, "Thou rejectest and hast a reigning enmity against my statutes, which thou declarest and professest a compliance with." And this is the spirit and practice of all who live in the sin of unbelief and rejection of Christ; they live in a way that is altogether inconsistent with the covenant of grace; for the sum and substance of the condition and engagement of that covenant is what every natural man is under the reigning power of enmity against, and lives in contradiction to. Therefore, I think, it follows, that they who know it is thus with them, have nothing to do to take God's covenant into their mouths; or, in other words, have no warrant to do this, until it be otherwise with them.

III. The nature of things seems to afford no good reason why the people of Christ should not openly profess a proper respect to him in their hearts, as well as a true notion of him in their heads, or a right opinion of him in their judgments.

I can conceive of nothing reasonably to be supposed the design or end of a public profession of religion, that does not as much require a profession of honor, esteem and friendship of heart towards Christ, as an orthodox opinion about him; or why the former should not be as much expected and required in order to a being admitted into the company of his friends and followers, as the latter It cannot be because the former is in itself not as important, and as much to be looked at, as the latter; seeing the very essence of religion itself consists in the former, and without it the latter is wholly vain, and makes us never the better; neither happier in ourselves, nor more acceptable to God. One end of a public profession of religion is the giving public honor to God: but surely the profession of inward esteem and a supreme respect of heart towards God is as agreeable to this design, and more directly tending to it, than the declaring of right speculative notions of him. We look upon it that our friends do the more especially and directly put honor upon us when upon proper occasions they stand ready not only to own the truth of such and such facts concerning us, but also to testify their high esteem and cordial and entire regard to us. When persons only manifest their doctrinal knowledge of things of religion, and express the assent of their judgments, but at the same time make no pretence to

any other than a being wholly destitute of all true love to God, and a being under the dominion of enmity against him, their profession is, in some respects, very greatly to God's dishonor: for they leave reason for the public greatly to suspect that they hold the truth in unrighteousness, and that they are some of those that have both seen and hated Christ and his Father, John xv. 24. Who of all persons have the greatest sin, and are most to God's dishonor.

I am at a loss, how that visibility of saintship, which the honored author of *The Appeal to the Learned* supposes to be all that is required in order to admission to the Lord's supper, can be much to God's honor, viz., such a visibility as leaves reason to believe, that the greater part of those who have it, are enemies to God in their hearts, and inwardly the servants of sin. Such a visibility of religion as this, seems rather to increase a visibility of wickedness in the world, and so of God's dishonor, than any thing else; i. e., it makes more wickedness visible to the eye of a human judgment, and gives men reason to think, there is more wickedness in the world, than otherwise would be visible to them: because we have reason to think, that those who live in a rejection of Christ, under the light of the gospel, and the knowledge and common belief of its doctrine, have vastly greater sin and guilt than other men. And that venerable divine himself did abundantly teach this.

Christ came into the world to engage in a war with God's enemies, *sin* and *Satan;* and a great war there is maintained between them; which war is concerning us; and the contest is, who shall have the possession of OUR HEARTS. Now, it is reasonable under these circumstances, that we should declare on whose side we are, whether on Christ's side, or on the side of his enemies. If we would be admitted among Christ's friends and followers, it is reasonable that we should profess we are *on the Lord's side*, and that we yield OUR HEARTS (which the contest is about) to him, and not to his rivals. And this seems plainly to be the design and nature of a public profession of Christ. If *this* profession is not made, no profession is made that is worth regarding, or worth the making, in such a case as this is, and to any such purpose as a being admitted among his visible friends. There is no other being on Christ's side, in this case, but a being so with an *undivided heart*, preferring him to all his rivals, and renouncing them all for his sake. The case admits of no neutrality, or lukewarmness, or a middle sort of persons with a *moral sincerity*, or such a common faith as is consistent with loving sin and the world better than Christ. *He that is not with me* (says Christ) *is against me.* And therefore none do profess to be on Christ's side but they who profess to renounce his rivals. For those who would be called Christians, to profess no higher regard to Christ than what will admit of a superior regard to the *world*, is more absurd than if a woman pretending to marry a man, and take him for her husband, should profess to take him in some sort, but yet not pretend to take him in such a manner as is inconsistent with her allowing other men a fuller possession of her, and greater intimacy with her than she allows him. The nature of the case, as it stands between us and Jesus Christ, is such, that an open solemn profession of being entirely for him, and giving him the possession of our hearts, renouncing all competitors, is more requisite in this case, than a like profession in any other case. The profession of an intermediate sort of state of our mind, is very disagreeable to the nature of Christ's errand, work, and kingdom in the world, and all that belongs to the designs and ends of his administrations; and for ministers and churches openly to establish such a kind of profession of Christ as part of his public service, which does not imply a pretence of any more than lukewarmness, is, I fear, to make a mere sham of a solemn public profession of

Christianity, and seems to be wholly without warrant from the word of God, and greatly to God's dishonor.

It cannot be justly here pretended, as a reason why the *opinion concerning doctrines* should be professed, and not *friendship* or *respect of heart*, that the former is more *easily discerned* and known by us than the latter. For though it be true, that men may be at a loss concerning the latter, yet it is as true that they may be so concerning the former too. They may be at a loss in many cases concerning the fulness of the determination of their own inclination and choice; and so they may concerning the fulness of the determination of their judgment. I know of nothing in human nature that hinders the acts of men's wills being properly subject to their own consciousness, any more than the acts of their judgment; nor of any reason to suppose that men may not discern their own *consent* as well as their *assent*. The Scripture plainly supposes gracious dispositions and acts to be things properly under the eye of conscience. 2 Cor. xiii. 5, "Know ye not your own selves?" John xxi. 15, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" And many other places. Nor is the nature of godliness less made known, than the true doctrines of religion. Piety of heart, in the more essential things belonging to it, is as clearly revealed, as the doctrines concerning the nature of God, the person of the Messiah, and the method of his redemption.

IV. We find in the Scripture, that all those of God's professing people, or visible saints who are not *truly pious*, are represented as *counterfeits*, as having *guile*, *disguise*, and a *false appearance*, as making *false pretences*, and as being *deceitful* and *hypocrites*. Thus Christ says of Nathaniel, John i. 47, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile;" that is, a truly gracious person; implying, that those of God's professing people, who are not gracious, are *guileful*, and deceitful in their profession. So sinners in Zion, or in God's visible church, are called *hypocrites*. Isa. xxxiii. 14, "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the *hypocrites*." Isa. xi. 17, "Every one is a *hypocrite* and an evil doer." So they are called *lying children*, Isa. xxx. 9, and chap. lix. 13, and are represented as *lying*, in pretending to be of *the temple* or church of God. Jer. vii. 2—4, "Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord.—Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." They are spoken of as falsely calling themselves of the holy city, Isa. xlviii. 1, 2. They are called *silver dross*, and *reprobate* or *refuse silver* (Ezek. xxxii. 18, Jer. vi. 30), which glistens and shows like true silver, but has not its inward worth. So they are compared to *adulterated wine*, Isa. i. 22, and to *trees* full of leaves bidding fair for fruitfulness, Matt. xxi. 19. *Clouds* that look as if they were full of rain, yet bring nothing but *wind*, Jude 12. *Wells without water*, that do but cheat the thirsty traveller, 2 Pet. ii. 13. A deceitful bow, that appears good, but fails the archer, Psal. lxxviii. 57, Hos. vii. 16. Mr Stoddard, in his *Appeal to the Learned*, from time to time supposes all *visible* saints, who are not truly pious, to be hypocrites, as in pages 15, 17, 18.

Now what ground or reason can there be thus to represent those as visible saints or members of God's visible church, who are not truly pious, if the profession of such does not imply any pretence to true piety; and when they never made a pretence to any thing more than common grace, or moral sincerity, which many of them truly have, and therefore are not at all hypocritical or deceitful in their pretences, and are as much without guile, in what they make a profession of, as Nathaniel was? The Psalmist speaking of sincere piety,

calls it the truth in the inward parts. Psal. li. 6, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts" It is called *truth* with reference to some declaration or profession made by God's visible people; but on the hypothesis which I oppose, common grace is as properly the truth, in the inward parts, in this respect, as saving grace. God says, concerning Israel, Deut. xxxii. 5, "Their spot is not the spot of his children." God here speaks of himself as it were disappointed The words have reference to some *profession* they had made. For why should this remark be made after this manner, that there were *spots* upon them, shrewd marks that they were not his *children*, if they never pretended to be his children, and never were accepted under any such notion to any of the privileges of his people?

God is pleased to represent himself in his word as though he *trusted* the profession of his visible people, and as *disappointed* when they did not approve themselves as his faithful, steadfast, and thorough friends. Isa. lxiii. 8, 9, 10, "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie. So he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy." The same is represented in many other places. I suppose that God speaks after this manner, because he, in his present, external dealings with his visible people, does not act in the capacity of the Searcher of Hearts, but accommodates himself to their nature, and the present state and circumstances of his church, and speaks to them and treats them after the manner of men, and deals with them in their own way. But, supposing the case to be even thus, there would be no ground for such representations, if there were no profession of true godliness. When God is represented as trusting that men will be his faithful friends, we must understand that he trusts to their pretences. But how improperly would the matter be so represented if there were no pretences to trust to, no pretences of any real, thorough friendship? However there may be a profession of some common affection that is morally sincere, yet there is no pretence of loving him more than, yea, not so much as his enemies. What reason to trust that they will be faithful to God as their master, when the religion they profess amounts to no more than serving two masters? What reason to trust that they will be stable in their ways, when they do not pretend to be of a single heart, and all know that the double-minded persons used to be unstable in all their ways? Those who only profess moral sincerity or common grace, do not pretend to love God above the world. And such grace is what God and man know is liable to pass away as the early dew and the morning cloud. If what men profess amounts to nothing beyond lukewarmness, it is not to be expected, that they will be faithful to the death. If men do not pretend to have any oil in their vessels, what cause can there be to trust that their lamps will not go out? If they do not pretend to have any root in them, what cause is there for any disappointment when they wither away?

When God, in the forementioned place, Isa. lxiii., represents himself as trusting Israel's profession, and saying, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; it cannot be understood, as if he trusted that they were his people in that sense, in which the ten tribes were called God's people after they had given up themselves to idolatry for two or three hundred years together without once repenting. But, surely they are my sincere saints and children, as they profess to be, Israelites indeed without guile; for surely they would not do so evil a thing as to make a lying profession. This seems to be the plain import of the words. It therefore shows that the profession they made was of real, vital godliness.

V. The eight first verses of the fifty-sixth chapter of Isaiah, I think, afford good evidence, that such qualifications are requisite in order to a due coming to the privileges of a visible church state, as I have insisted on. In the four preceding chapters we have a prophecy of gospel times, the blessed state of things which the Messiah should introduce. The prophecy of the same times is continued in the former part of this chapter. Here we have a prophecy of the abolishing of the ceremonial law, which was a wall of separation, that kept two sorts of persons, viz., Eunuchs and Gentiles, out from the ordinances of the church or congregation of the Lord (for the words *congregation* and *church* are the same), the place of whose meeting was in God's house, within God's walls, verse 5, and on God's holy mountain, verse 7. That in the ceremonial law, which especially kept out the Gentiles, was the law of circumcision, and the law that the eunuch shall not enter into the congregation or church of the Lord, we have in Deut. xxiii. 1. Now here it is foretold that in the days when "God's salvation shall be come, and his righteousness revealed, by the coming of the Messiah, this wall of separation should be broken down, this ceremonial law removed out of the way (but still taking care to note, that the law of the Sabbath shall be continued, as not being one of those ceremonial observances which shall be abolished); and then it is declared, what is the great qualification which should be looked at in those blessed days, when these external, ceremonial qualifications of circumcision and soundness of body should no more be insisted on, viz., piety of heart and practice, *joining themselves to the Lord, loving the name of the Lord, to be his servants, choosing the things that please him*, &c. Ver. 3. &c., "Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree; for thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant, even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place, and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give unto them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant: even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him besides those that are gathered unto him."

VI. The *representations* which CHRIST makes of his *visible church*, from time to time, in his discourses and parables, make the thing manifest which I have laid down.

As particularly the representation which Christ makes in the latter end of Matthew vii., of the final issue of things with respect to the different sorts of members of his visible church: those that only say, *Lord, Lord*, and those who *do the will of his Father which is in heaven; those who build their house upon a rock*, and *those who build upon the sand*. They are all (of both kinds) evidently such as have pretended to a high honor and regard to Christ, have claimed an interest in him, and accordingly hoped to be finally acknowledged and received as some of his. Those visible Christians who are not true Christians, for the present, cry, Lord, Lord; that is, are forward to profess respect, and claim relation to him; and will be greatly disappointed hereafter in not being owned by him. They shall then come and cry, Lord, Lord. This compellation *Lord*, is com-

monly given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, as signifying the special relation which Christ stood in to his disciples, rather than his universal dominion. They shall then come, and earnestly claim relation, as it is represented of Israel of old, in the day of their distress, and God's awful judgments upon them, Hos. viii. 2: "Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee."

To *know* does not here intend speculative knowledge, but knowing as one *knows his own*, has a peculiar respect to, and owns and has an interest in. These false disciples shall not only claim interest in Christ, but shall plead and bring arguments to confirm their claim; *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works?* It is evidently the language of those that are dreadfully disappointed. *Then* (says Christ) *I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity; q. d.*, "Though they profess a relation to me, I will profess none to them; though they plead that they know me, and have an interest in me, I will declare to them that I never owned them as any of mine; and will bid them depart from me as those that I will never own, nor have any thing to do with, in such a relation as they claim." Thus all the hopes they had lived in, of being hereafter received and owned by Christ, as in the number of his friends and favorites, are dashed in pieces. This is further illustrated by what follows, in the comparison of the wise man who built his house on a rock; representing those professed disciples who build their hope of an interest in him on a sure foundation, whose house shall stand in the trying day, and the foolish man who built his house on the sand; representing those professed disciples or hearers of his word, who build their opinion and hope of an interest in him on a false foundation, whose house in the great time of trial shall have a dreadful fall, their vain hope shall issue in dismal disappointment and confusion.

On the whole it is manifest that all visible Christians or saints, all Christ's professing disciples or hearers that profess him to be their Lord, according to the Scripture notion of professing Christ, are such as profess a saving interest in him and relation to him, and live in the hope of being hereafter owned as those that are so interested and related. By those that hear Christ's sayings, in this place, are not meant merely auditors of the word preached; for there are many such who make no pretence to an interest in Christ, and have no such hope or opinion built on any foundation at all: but those who profess to hearken to, believe, and yield submission to the word of Christ. This is confirmed by the manner in which the matter is expressed in Luke vi. 47, "Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:" i. e., whosoever visibly comes to me, and is one of my professed disciples, &c.

This matter is confirmed by that parallel representation that Christ gives us in Luke xiii. 25—29, of his final disposal of the two different sorts of persons, that are in the kingdom or church of God; viz., those who shall be allowed in his church or kingdom when it comes to its state of glory, and those who, though they have visibly been in it, shall be thrust out of it. It is represented of the latter, that they shall then come and claim relation and interest, and cry, *Lord, Lord, open unto us;* and Christ shall answer and say, *I know you not whence you are.* As much as to say, "Why do you claim relation and acquaintance with me? You are strangers to me, I do not own you." *Then* (it is said) *they shall begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.* As much as to say, "This is a strange thing that thou dost not own us! We are exceedingly surprised that thou shouldst ac-

count us as strangers that have no part in thee, when we have eaten and drunk in thy presence," &c. And when he shall finally insist upon it, that he does not own them, and will have nothing to do with them as his, *then there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;* then they shall be filled with dismal disappointment, confusion and despair, when they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, with whom they expected to dwell forever there, and they themselves thrust out. By this it is evident, that those visible members of the kingdom of God, that hereafter shall be cast out of it, are such as look upon themselves now interested in Christ and the eternal blessings of his kingdom, and make that profession.

The same is manifest by the parable of the ten virgins, Matt. xxv. In the first verse it is said, *The kingdom of heaven* [i. e., the church of Christ] is *likened unto ten virgins.* The two sorts of virgins evidently represent the two sorts of members of the visible church of Christ; the wise, those who are true Christians; and the foolish, those who are apparent, but not true Christians. The foolish virgins were to all appearance the children of the bridechamber; they were such as to appearance had accepted of the invitation to the wedding, which represents the invitations of the gospel, wherein the bridegroom and bride say, *Come;* they herein had testified the same respect to the bridegroom and bride that the wise had. The parable naturally leads us to suppose, that they were to appearance every way of the same society with the wise, pretended to be the same sort of persons, in like manner interested in the bridegroom, and that they were received by the wise under such a notion; they made a profession of the very same kind of honor and regard to the bridegroom, in going forth to meet him with their lamps, as his friends to show him respect, and had the same hope of enjoying the privileges and entertainments of the wedding: there was a difference with respect to *oil in their vessels,* but there was no difference with respect to their lamps. One thing intended by their *lamps,* as I suppose is agreed by all, is their *profession.* This is the same in both; and in both it is a profession of *grace,* as a *lamp* (from its known end and use) is a manifestation or show of *oil.* Another thing signified by the blaze of their lamps seems to be the light of *hope:* their lamps signify in general the appearance of grace or godliness, including both the appearance of it to the view or judgment of others, and also to their own view, and the judgment they entertain of themselves: their lamps shone, not only in the eyes of others, but also in their own eyes. This is confirmed, because on the hearing the midnight cry, they find their *lamps are gone out;* which seems most naturally to represent this to us, that however hypocrites may maintain their hopes while they live, and while their Judge is at a distance, yet when they come to be alarmed by the sound of the last trumpet, their hopes will immediately expire and vanish away, and very often fail them in the sensible approaches of death. *Where is the hope of the hypocrite, when God takes away his soul?* But till the midnight cry the *foolish virgins* seem to entertain the same hopes with the wise; when they first went forth with the wise virgins, their lamps shone in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others, in like manner with the lamps of the wise virgins. So that by this parable it also appears, that all visible members of the Christian church, or kingdom of heaven, are those that profess to be *gracious* persons, as looking on themselves, and seeming, or at least pretending, to be such.

And that true piety is what persons ought to look at in themselves as the qualification that is a proper ground for them to proceed upon, in coming into the visible church of Christ, and taking the privileges of its members, I think is evident also from the parable of the *marriage,* which the king made for his son,

Matt. xxii., particularly the 11th and 12th verses: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." Mr. Stoddard says (Appeal, pages 4, 5), "Here is a representation of the day of judgment; and such persons as come for salvation without a *wedding garment* shall be rejected in that day. So that here being nothing said about the Lord's supper, all arguing from this Scripture falls to the ground." Upon which I take leave to observe, that the *king's coming in to see the guests*, means Christ's visiting his professing church at the day of judgment, I make no doubt: but that the *guests' coming into the king's house* means persons coming for salvation at the day of judgment, I am not convinced. If it may properly be represented, that any reprobates will come for salvation at the day of judgment, they will do so *before* the king appears; but Christ will appear first, and then they will come and cry to him for salvation. Whereas, in this parable the guests are represented as gathered together in the king's house *before* the king appears, and the king as coming in and finding them there; where they had entered while the day of grace lasted, while the door was kept open, and invitations given forth; and not like those who come for salvation at the day of judgment, Luke xiii. 25, who come *after the door is shut, and stand without, knocking at the door.* I think it is apparent beyond all contradiction, that by the guests' coming into the king's house at the invitation of the servants, is intended Jews and Gentiles coming into the Christian church, at the preaching of Christ's apostles and others, making profession of godliness, and expecting to partake of the eternal marriage supper. I showed before, that that which is called the house of God in the New Testament, is his church. Here in this parable the king first sends forth his servants to *call them that were bidden*, and they would not come; and they having repeatedly rejected the invitation and evil entreated the servants, the king sent forth his armies and burnt up their city; representing the Jews being first invited, and rejecting the invitations of the gospel, and persecuting Christ's ministers, and so provoking God to give up Jerusalem and the nation to destruction. Then the king sends forth his servants into the highways, to call in all sorts; upon which many flocked into the king's house; hereby most plainly representing the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, and their flocking into the Christian church. This gathering of the Gentiles into the king's house, is BEFORE the day of judgment, and the man without the wedding garment among them. It fitly represents the resorting that should be to the Christian church, during the day of grace, through all ages; but by no means signifies men's coming for salvation *after* the day of grace is at an end, at Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven. Let this parable be compared with that parallel place, Luke xiv. 16—24. The company gathered to the marriage in this parable, plainly represents the same thing with the company of virgins gathered to the marriage in the other parable, Matt. xxv., viz., the company of visible saints, or the company belonging to the visible kingdom of heaven; and therefore both parables are introduced alike with these words, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto*, &c. As to the man's being cast out of the king's house when the king comes in to see his guests, it is agreeable to other representations made of false Christians being *thrust out of God's kingdom* at the day of judgment; *the servant's not abiding in the house forever, though the son abideth ever: God's taking away their part out of the holy city, and blotting their names out of the book of life*, &c.

Mr Stoddard says, "This person that had not a wedding garment, was a

reprobate; but every one that partakes of the Lord's supper without grace is not a rebrobate." I answer, all that will be found in the king's house without grace when the king comes in to see the guests, are doubtless reprobates.

If it be questioned whether by the wedding garment be meant true piety, or whether hereby is not intended moral sincerity, let the Scripture interpret itself; which elsewhere tells us plainly what the wedding garment is at the marriage of the Son of God: Rev. xix. 7, 8, "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." None, I suppose, will say, this righteousness that is so pure, is the common grace of lukewarm professors, and those that go about to serve God and mammon. The same wedding garment we have an account of in Psal, xlv. 13, 14: "The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold: she shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." But we need go nowhere else but to the parable itself; that alone determines the matter. The wedding garment spoken of as that without which professors will be excluded from among God's people at the day of judgment, is not moral sincerity, or common grace, but special saving grace. If common grace were the wedding garment intended, not only would the king cast out those that he found *without* a wedding garment, but also many *with* a wedding garment: for all such as shall be found then with no better garment than moral sincerity will be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness; such a wedding garment as this will not save them. So that true piety, unfeigned faith, or the righteousness of Christ which is upon every one that believeth, is doubtless the wedding garment intended. But if a person has good and proper ground to proceed on in *coming into the king's house*, that knows he is without this wedding garment, why should the king upbraid him, saying, *How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?* And why should he be speechless when asked such a question? Would he not have had a good answer to make? viz., "Thou thyself hast given me leave to come in hither, without a wedding garment." Or this, "Thy own word is my warrant; which invited such as had only common grace or moral sincerity to come in."

VII. If we consider what took place, in *fact*, in the manner and circumstances of the *admission* of members into the primitive Christian church, and the profession they made in order to their admission, as we have these things recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, it will further confirm the point I have endeavored to prove.

We have an account from time to time, concerning these, of their first being awakened by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers, and earnestly inquiring what they should do to be saved; and of their being directed to *repent and believe on the Lord Jesus*, as the way to have their sins blotted out, and to be saved; and then upon their *professing* that they did believe, of their being baptized and admitted into the Christian church. Now can any reasonably imagine, that these primitive converts, when they made that profession in order to their admission, had any such *distinction* in view as that which some now make, of two sorts of real Christianity, two sorts of sincere faith and repentance, one with a moral and another with a gracious sincerity? Or that the apostles, who discipled them and baptized them, had instructed them in any such distinction? The history informs us of their teaching them but one faith and repentance; *believing in Christ that they might be saved*, and *repentance for the remission of sins;* and it would be unreasonable to suppose, that a thought of any lower or other kind entered into the heads of these converts, when imme-

diately upon their receiving such instructions they professed faith and repentance; or that those who admitted them understood them as meaning any lower or other kind in what they professed.

Let us particularly consider what we are informed concerning those multitudes whose admission we have an account of in Acts ii. We are told concerning the *three thousand* first converts, how that they were greatly awakened by the preaching of the apostles, pricked in their hearts, made sensible of their guilt and misery; "and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" i. e., What shall we do to be saved, and that our sins may be remitted? Upon which they directed them what they should do viz, *Repent and be baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins.* They are here directed into the way of salvation, viz., faith and repentance, with a proper profession of these. Then, we are told, that "they which gladly received the word, were baptized;" that is, they which appeared gladly to receive the word, or manifested and professed a cordial and cheerful compliance which the calls of the word, with the directions which the apostles had given them. The manifestation was doubtless by some profession, and the profession was of that repentance for the remission of sins, and that faith in Christ, which the apostles had directed them to, in answer to their inquiry, *what they should do to be saved:* I can see no ground to suppose they thought of any lower or other kind. And it is evident by what follows, that these converts now looked upon it that they had complied with these directions, and so were at peace with God: their business now is to rejoice and praise God from day to day: *they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship—continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God.* The account of them now is not as of persons under awakenings, weary and heavy laden sinners, under an awful sense of guilt and wrath, pricked in their hearts, as before; but of persons whose sorrow was turned into joy, looking on themselves as now in a good estate. And in the last verse it is said, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved;" in the original it is τους σωζομενους *the saved; οι σωζομενοι* was a common appellation given to all visible Christians, or to all members of the visible Christian church. It is as much as to say, *the converted*, or *the regenerate.* Being converted is in Scripture called a being *saved*, because it is so in effect; they were "passed from death to life," John v. 24. Tit. i. 4, "According to his mercy he SAVED us, by the washing of REGENERATION, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." 2 Tim. i. 9, "Who hath SAVED us, and called us with a holy calling." Not that all who were added to the visible church were indeed regenerated, but they were so in profession and repute, and therefore were so in name. 1 Cor. i. 18, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us [i. e., us Christians] which are *saved* [τοις σωζομενοις] it is the power of God." So those that from time to time were added to the primitive church, were all called *οι σωζομενοι, the saved.* Before, while under awakenings, they used to inquire of their teachers what they should do to be *saved;* and the directions that used to be given them, were to *repent* and *believe in Christ;* and before they were admitted into the church, they professed that they did so: and thenceforward, having visibly complied with the terms proposed, they were called THE SAVED; it being supposed, that they now had obtained what they inquired after when they asked what they should do to be *saved.* Accordingly we find that after that, from time to time, Christ's ministers treated them no more as miserable perishing sinners, but as true converts; not setting before them their sin and

misery to awaken them, and to convince them of the necessity of a Saviour, exhorting them to fly from the wrath to come, and seek conversion to God; but exhorting them to *hold fast the profession of their faith*, to *continue in the grace of God*, and persevere in holiness; endeavoring by all means to *confirm* and *strengthen them* in grace. Thus when a great number believed and turned to the Lord at Antioch, Barnabas was sent to them; "who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord," Acts xi. 23; see also Acts xiii. 43, and xiv. 22, and xv. 32, 41, and xx. 32. And when the apostles heard of the conversion of the Gentiles to the Christian faith, visible by their profession when they joined themselves to the Christian church, they in charity supposed and believed that God had given them saving repentance, and a heart-purifying faith. Acts xi. 18, "When they heard these thing they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life." Chap. xv. 9, "And put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith.*"

If any should here object that when such multitudes were converted from Judaism and Heathenism, and received into the Christian church in so short a season, it was impossible there should be *time* for each one to say so much in his public profession, as to be any credible exhibition of true godliness to the church: I answer, this objection will soon vanish, if we particularly consider how the case was with those primitive converts, and how they were dealt with by their teachers. It was apparently the manner of the first preachers of the gospel, when their hearers were awakened and brought in good earnest to inquire what they should do to be saved, then particularly to instruct them in the way of salvation, and explain to them what qualifications must be in them, or what they must do in order to their being saved, agreeable to Christ's direction, Mark xvi. 15, 16. This we find was the method they took with the *three thousand*, in the second chapter of Acts, verses 37—40. And it seems they were particular and full in it: they said much more to them than the words recorded. It is said, verse 40, "With many other words did Peter testify and exhort." And this we find to be the course Paul and Silas took with the jailer, chap. xvi. Who also gave more large and full instructions than are rehearsed in the history. And when they had thus instructed them, they doubtless saw to it, either by themselves or some others who assisted them, that their instructions were *understood* by them, before they proceeded to baptize them: for I suppose none with whom I have to do in this controversy, will maintain, from the apostles' example, that we ought not to insist on a good degree of doctrinal knowledge in the way and terms of salvation, as requisite to the admission of members into the church. And after they were satisfied that they well understood these things, it took up no great time to make a profession of them, or to declare that they did, or found in themselves, those things they had been told of as necessary to their salvation. To be sure, after they had been well informed what saving faith and repentance were, it took up no more time to profess *that* faith and repentance, than any other. In this case, not only the converts' words, but the words of the preacher, which they consented to, and in effect made their own, are to be taken into their profession. For persons that are known to be of an honest character, and manifestly qualified with good doctrinal knowledge of the nature of true godliness, in the more essential things which belong to it, solemnly to profess they have or do those things, is to make as credible a profession of godliness as I insist upon. And we may also well suppose, that more words were uttered by the professors, and with other circumstances to render them

credible, than are recorded in that very brief summary history, which we have of the primitive church in the Acts of the Apostles; and also we may yet suppose one thing further, viz., that in that extraordinary state of things so particular a profession was not requisite in order to the church's satisfaction, either of doctrines *assented* to, or of the *consent* and disposition of the heart, as may be expedient in a more ordinary state of things; for various reasons that might be given, would it not too much lengthen out this discourse.

One thing which makes it very evident, that the inspired ministers of the primitive Christian church looked upon *saving faith* as the proper matter of the profession requisite in order to admission into the church, is the story of Philip and the eunuch, in Acts viii. For when the eunuch desires to be baptized, Philip makes answer, verse 37, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Which words certainly imply, *that believing with all his heart* was requisite in order to his coming to this ordinance properly and in a due manner. I cannot conceive what should move Philip to utter these words, or what he should aim at in them, if he at the same time supposed, that the eunuch had no manner of need to look at any such qualification in himself, or at all to inquire whether he had such a faith or no, in order to determine whether he might present himself as the subject of baptism; many that are without it, being as properly qualified for this, as they that have it.

It is said by some, that Philip intended nothing more by *believing with all his heart*, than that he believed that doctrine that *Jesus Christ was the Son of God*, with a moral sincerity of persuasion. But here again I desire the Scripture may be allowed to be its own interpreter. The Scripture very much abounds with such phrases as this, *with all the heart*, or *with the whole heart*, in speaking of religious matters. And the manifest intent of them is to signify a gracious simplicity and godly sincerity. Thus, 1 Sam. xii. 20, "Turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart." So verse 24, "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth, with all your heart." 1 Kings viii. 23, "Who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their heart." Chap. xiv. 8, "My servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart." 2 Kings x. 31, "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart." 2 Chron. xxii. 9, "Jehoshaphat sought the Lord with all his heart." Chap. xxxi. 20, 21, "Hezekiah wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God; and in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart." Psal. ix. 1, "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart." Psal. lxxxvi. 12, "I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and will glorify thy name." Psal. cxi. 1, "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright." And cxix. 2, "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." Verse 10, "With my whole heart have I sought thee." Verse 34, "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart." Verse 69, "The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart." Jer. xxiv. 7, "And I will give them a heart to know me—for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." Joel ii. 12, "Turn ye even unto me with all your heart—and rend your heart, and not your garments." And we have the like phrases in innumerable other places. And I suppose that not so much as one place can be produced, wherein there is the least evidence or appearance of their being used to signify any thing but a *gracious sincerity*. And indeed it must be a very im-

proper use of language, to speak of those as performing acts of religion *with all their hearts*, whose heart the Scriptures do abundantly represent as under the reigning power of sin and unbelief, and as those that do not give God their hearts, but give them to other things; as those who go about to *serve two masters*, and as those who indeed *draw near to God with their lips*, but have at the same time their hearts *far from him*, and running more after other things; and who have not a *single eye* nor *single heart*. The word *believe*, in the New Testament, answers to the word *trust* in the Old; and therefore the phrase used by Philip, of *believing with all the heart*, is parallel to that in Proverbs iii., "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." And *believing with the heart*, is a phrase used in the New Testament to signify *saving* faith—Rom. x. 9, 10, "If thou shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." The same is signified by *obeying the form of doctrine from the heart*, Rom. vi. 17. 18, "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you; being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Here it is manifest, that *saving faith* is intended by obeying the form of doctrine *from the heart*. And the same is signified as if it had been said, *ye have believed with the heart* the form of doctrine. But Philip uses a yet stronger expression, he does not only say, *if thou believest with the heart*, or from the heart, *but with all thine heart*. And besides, for any to suppose, that those same persons which the Scriptures represent in some places as under the power of an *evil heart of unbelief;* and as *double minded* with regard to their faith, James i. 6, 7, 8; and as those who though they *believe for a while*, yet have their hearts like a *rock*, in which faith has *no root*, Luke viii.; and yet that this same sort of persons are in other Scriptures spoken of as *believing with all their heart;* I say, for any to suppose this, would be to make the sound or voice of God's word not very harmonious and consonant to itself. And one thing more I would observe on this head, there is good reason to suppose that Philip, while he sat in the chariot with the eunuch, and (as we are told) *preached unto him Jesus*, had showed to him the way of salvation, had opened to him the way of getting an interest in Christ, or obtaining salvation by him, viz., believing in him, agreeably to Christ's own direction, Mark xvi. 15, 16. And agreeably to what we find to be the manner of the first preachers of the gospel: and therefore now, when after this discourse he puts it to the eunuch, whether he *believed with all his heart;* it is natural to suppose, that he meant whether he found his *heart* acquiescing in the gospel way of salvation, or whether he sincerely exercised that *belief in Christ* which he had been inculcating; and it would be natural for the eunuch so to understand him.

Here if it be objected that the eunuch's answer, and the profession he hereupon made (wherein he speaks nothing of his *heart*, but barely says), *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, shows that he understood no more by the inquiry than whether he gave his *assent* to that doctrine: to this I answer; we must take this confession of the eunuch's together with Philip's words, which they were a reply to, and expound the one by the other. Nor is there any reason but to understand it in the same sense in which we find the words of the like confession elsewhere in the New Testament, and as the words of such a confession were wont to be used in those days, as particularly the words of Peter's confession, Matt. xvi. 16, "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God:" which was a profession of saving faith, as appears by what Christ says upon it. And we read, 1 Cor. xii. 3, "No man

can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" Not but that a man might make a profession in these words, without the Holy Ghost, but he could not do it heartily, or WITH ALL HIS HEART. So 1 John iv. 15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." i. e., Whoever makes this Christian confession (this profession which all Christians were wont to make) cordially, or with his whole heart, God dwells in him, &c. But it was *thus* that the eunuch was put upon making this confession.

VIII. It is apparent by the epistles of the apostles to the primitive Christian churches, their manner of addressing and treating them throughout all those epistles, and what they say *to* them and *of* them, that all those churches were constituted of members so qualified as has been represented, having such a visibility of godliness as has been insisted on; those who were reputed to be *real saints*, were taken into the church under a *notion* of their being truly pious persons, made that *profession*, and had this *hope* of themselves; and that *natural* and *graceless* men were not admitted designedly, but *unawares*, and beside the aim of the primitive churches and ministers; and that such as remained in good standing, and free from an offensive behavior, continued to have the reputation and esteem of real saints, with the apostles, and one with another.

There were numbers indeed in these churches, who after their admission fel. into an offensive behavior; some of which the apostles, in their epistles, speak doubtfully of; others that had behaved themselves very scandalously, they speak of in language that seems to suppose them to be wicked men. The apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, oftentimes speaks of some among them that had embraced heretical opinions, and had behaved themselves in a very disorderly and schismatical manner, whom he represents as exposed to censure, and to whom he threatens excommunication; and upon occasion of so many offences of this kind appearing among them that for a while had been thought well of, he puts them all upon *examining* themselves, whether they were indeed *in the faith*, and whether Christ was truly *in them*, as they and others had supposed, 2 Cor. xiii. And the same apostle speaks of great numbers among the Galatians, who had made a high profession, and were such as he had thought well of when they were first admitted into the church, but since had given him cause to *doubt* of their state, by giving heed to seducers, that denied the great gospel doctrine of *justification by faith alone:* yet notwithstanding, the apostle speaks of them in such language as shows surprise and disappointment, and implies that he had looked upon them as true Christians, and hoped that his labors among them had had a saving effect upon them. Gal. i. 6, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel." Chap. iv. 11, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." And ver. 20, "I desire to be present with you now, and change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you." As much as to say, "I have heretofore addressed you with the voice of love and charity, as supposing you the dear children of God; but now I begin to think of speaking to you in other language." In the same chapter, to show them what little reason he had to expect that they would come to this, he puts them in mind of the *great profession* they had made, and the extraordinary appearances there had formerly been in them of fervent piety. Ver. 15, "Where is the blessedness you spake of? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them unto me." The Apostle James in his epistle, speaks of scandalous persons among the *twelve tribes that were scattered abroad;* some that were men of *unbridled tongues;* some

that seem to have been a kind of Antinomians in their principles, and of a very bitter and violent spirit, that reproached, condemned, and *cursed* their brethren, and raised *wars* and *fightings* among professing Christians, and were also very unclean in their practice, *adulterers* and *adulteresses*, chap, iv. 4. And in the 5th chapter of his epistle, he seems to speak to the unbelieving Jews, who persecuted the Christians, ver. 6. And the apostles are also often speaking of some that had once been admitted into the church, *crept in unawares*, who had apostatized from Christianity, and finally proved notoriously wicked men. But otherwise, and as to such members of the visible church as continued in the same good standing and visibility of Christianity, wherein they were admitted, it is evident by the epistles of the apostles, they were all in the eye of a Christian judgment *truly pious* or *gracious* persons. And here I desire the following things may be particularly observed.

The apostles continually, in their epistles, speak *to* them and *of* them, as supposing and judging them to be gracious persons. Thus the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the church of the Romans, chap. i. 7, speaks of the members of that church as *beloved of God*. In chap. vi. 17, 18, &c., he "thanks God, that they had obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which had been delivered them, and were made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness," &c. The apostle in giving thanks to God for this, must not only have a kind of *negative charity* for them, as not knowing but that they were gracious persons, and so *charitably hoping* (as we say) that it was so; but he seems to have formed a *positive judgment* that they were such: his thanksgiving must at least be founded on rational probability; since it would be but mocking of God to give him *thanks* for bestowing a mercy which at the same time he did not see reason positively to believe was bestowed. In chap. vii. 4, 5, 6, the apostle speaks of them as those that once *were in the flesh*, and *were under the law*, but now *delivered from the law, and dead to it*. In chap. viii. 15, and following verses, he tells them, *they had received the Spirit of adoption*, and speaks of them as *having the witness of the Spirit that they were the children of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*. And the whole of his discourse, to the end of the chapter, implies, that he esteemed them truly gracious persons. In chap. ix. 23, 24, he speaks of the Christian Romans, together with all other Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, as *vessels of mercy*. In xiv. 6, 7, 8, speaking of the difference that then was among professing Christians, in point of regard to the ceremonial institutions of the law, he speaks of both parties as acting from a gracious principle, and as those that lived to the Lord, and should die unto the Lord: "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord, &c. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man [i. e. *none of us*] dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." In chap. xv. 14, he says, "I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye are full of goodness." His being thus persuaded implies a positive judgment of charity.

And the same apostle in his first epistle to the Corinthians, directs it to "the church at Corinth, that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus;" i. e., to all visible Christians through the world, or all the members of Christ's visible church everywhere: and continuing his speech of these, chap. i. 8, he speaks of them as those "that God would confirm to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ:" plainly speaking of them all, as persons, in Christian esteem, savingly converted. In the next verse, he speaks of the *faithfulness of God* as engaged thus to preserve them to salvation, *having called them*

to the fellowship of his Son. And in the 30th verse, he speaks of them as having a saving interest in Christ: "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus; who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." In chap. iii. 21, 22, 23, he says to the members of the church of Corinth, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's." In chapter iv. 15, he tells them, *he had begotten them through the gospel.* In chap vi. 1, 2, 3, he speaks of them as "those who shall judge the world, and shall judge angels:" and in ver. 11, he says to them, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God." And in chap. xv. 49, to the end, he speaks of them as having an interest, with him and other Christians, in the happiness and glory of the *resurrection of the just.* And in his second epistle, chap. i. 7, he says to them, "Our hope of you is steadfast; knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." This steadfast hope implies a positive judgment. We must here understand the apostle to speak of such members of the church of Corinth, as had not visibly backslidden, as they whom he elsewhere speaks doubtfully of. Again, in the 14th and 15th verses, he speaks of a *confidence* which he had that they *should be his rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.* In all reason, we must conclude, there was a visibility of grace, carrying with it an apparent probability in the eyes of the Apostle, which was the ground of this his *confidence.* Such an apparent probability, and his confidence as built upon it, are both expressed in chap. iii. 3, 4, "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart; and such trust have we through Christ to God-ward." And in ver. 18, the apostle speaks of them, with himself and other Christians, as *all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,* and *being changed into the same image from glory to glory.*

And in the epistle to the churches of Galatia, chap. iv. 26, the apostle speaks of visible Christians, as visibly belonging to heaven, the Jerusalem *which is above.* And, ver. 28, 29, represents them to be the *children of the promise, as Isaac was; and born after the Spirit.* In the 6th verse of the same chapter, he says to the Christian Galatians, *because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* And in chap. vi. 1, he speaks of those of them that had not fallen into scandal, as *spiritual persons.*

In his epistle to that great church of Ephesus, at the beginning, he blesses God on behalf of the members of that church, as being together with himself and all *the faithful in Christ Jesus,* "chosen in him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein God had made them accepted in the beloved; in whom they had redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." In chap. i. 13, 14, he thus writes to them: "In whom ye also trusted.—In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." And in chap. ii. at the beginning: "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." With much more, showing that they were, in a charitable esteem, regenerated persons, and heirs of salvation.

So in the epistle to the members of the church of Philippi, the apostle sa-

luting them in the beginning of it, tells them that he "thanks God upon every remembrance of them for their fellowship in the gospel; being *confident* of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work in them, would perform it until the day of Christ: even (says he) as it is meet for me to think this of you all." If it was meet for him to think this of them, and to be confident of it, he had at least some appearing rational probability to found his judgment and confidence upon; for surely it is not *meet* for reasonable creatures to *think* at random, and be *confident* without reason. In verses 25, 26, he speaks of his "confidence that he should come to them for their furtherance and joy of faith, that their rejoicing might be more abundant in Christ Jesus." Which words certainly suppose that they were persons who had already received Christ, and comfort in him; had already obtained faith and joy in Christ, and only needed to have it increased.

In the epistle to the members of the church of Colosse, the apostle, saluting them in the beginning of the epistle, "gives thanks for their faith in Christ Jesus, and love to all saints, and the hope laid up for them in heaven;" and speaks of "the gospel's bringing forth fruit in them, since the day they knew the grace of God in truth;" i. e., since the day of their saving conversion. In chap. i. 8, he speaks of "their love in the Spirit." Verses 12, 13, 14, he speaks of them as "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; *as* being delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; *as* having redemption through Christ's blood, and the forgiveness of sins." In chap. iii. at the beginning, he speaks of them as "risen with Christ; *as* being dead [i. e. *to the law, to sin, and the world*]; *as having* their life hid with Christ in God; and being such as "when Christ their life should appear, should appear with him in glory." In ver. 7, he speaks of them as "having once walked and lived in lusts, but having now put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

In the first epistle to the members of the church of Thessalonica, in words annexed to his salutation, chap. i., he declares what kind of visibility there was of their *election of God*, in the appearance there had been of true and saving conversion, and their consequent holy life, verses 3—7. And in the beginning of the second epistle, he speaks of their *faith and love greatly increasing;* and in verse 7, he expresses his *confidence* of meeting them in eternal *rest*, when *the Lord Jesus Christ should be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.* And in chap. ii. 13, he *gives thanks to God that from the beginning he had chosen them to salvation.*

In the epistle to the Christian Hebrews, though the apostle speaks of some that once belonged to their churches, but had apostatized and proved themselves hypocrites; yet concerning the rest that remained in good standing, he says, chap. vi. 9, *I am persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.* (Where we may again note, his being thus persuaded, evidently implies a positive judgment.) And in chap. xii. 22, &c., he speaks of them as visibly belonging to the glorious society of *heaven.* And in chap. xiii. 5, 6, he speaks of them as those who may *boldly say, The Lord is my helper.*

The Apostle James, writing to the Christians of the *twelve tribes which were scattered abroad*, speaks of them as regenerated persons, meaning, as I observed before, those which were in good standing. Chap. i. 18, "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. The Apostle Peter, writing to the Jewish Christians, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (large countries, and

therefore they must in the whole be supposed to be a great multitude of people), to all these the apostle in the inscription or direction of his first epistle, gives the title of *elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* And in the verses next following, speaks of them as regenerated, "or begotten again to a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible," &c. And as "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation:" and says to them in verses 8, 9, "Whom (*namely, Christ*) having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." And in verse 18, to the end, the apostle speaks of them as "redeemed from their vain conversation, by the precious blood of Christ.—And as having purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.—Being born again of incorruptible seed," &c. And in the former part of chap. ii. he speaks of them as "living stones, coming to Christ, and on him built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.—*And as* those that believe, to whom Christ is precious.—*As* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, called out of darkness into marvellous light." The church at Babylon, occasionally mentioned in chap. v. 13, is said to be *elected together with them.* And in his second epistle (which appears by chap. iii. 1, to be written to the same persons) the inscription is, *To them which have obtained like precious faith with us,* i. e., with the apostles and servants of Christ. And in the third chapter, he tells them both his epistles were designed to *stir up their* PURE *minds.*

In the first epistle of John, written (for aught appears) to professing Christians in general, chap. ii. 12, &c., the apostle tells them, "He writes to them because their sins were forgiven, because they had known him that was from the beginning.—Because they had overcome the wicked one," &c. In verses 20, 21, he tells them "they have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things; and that he did not write to them because they had *not* known the truth, but because they *had* known it," &c. And in verse 27, he says, "The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." And in the beginning of chap. iii. he addresses them as those "who were the sons of God, who when he should appear should be like him, because they should see him as he is." In chap. iv. 4, he says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome," &c.

The Apostle Jude, in his general epistle, speaks much of apostates and their wickedness; but to other professing Christians, that had not fallen away, he says, verses 20, 21, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life:" plainly supposing that they had professed faith with love to God our Saviour, and were by the apostle considered as his friends and lovers.—Many other passages to the like purpose might be observed in the epistles, but these may suffice.

Now how unaccountable would these things be, if the case was, that the members of the primitive Christian churches were not admitted into them under any such notion as their being really godly persons and heirs of eternal life, nor with any respect of such a character appearing on them; and that they themselves joined to these churches without any such pretence, as having no such opinion of themselves!

But it is particularly evident that they had such an opinion of themselves, as well as the apostles of them, by many things the apostles say in the epistles. Thus in Rom. viii. 15, 16, the apostle speaks of them as "having received the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of God bearing witness with their spirits, that they were the children of God." And chap. v. 2, "Of their rejoicing in hope of the glory of God." In 1 Cor. i. 7, he speaks of them as waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus. In chap. xv. 17, the apostle says to the members of the church of Corinth, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." Plainly supposing, that they hoped their sins were forgiven. In Philip. i. 25, 26, the apostle speaks of his coming to Philippi, to "increase their joy of faith, and that their rejoicing in Christ might be more abundant." Implying (as was observed before) that they had received comfort already, in some degree, as supposing themselves to have a saving interest in Christ. In 1 Thess. i. 10, he speaks of the members of the church of Thessalonica as "waiting for Christ from heaven, *as one* who had delivered them from the wrath to come." In Heb. vi. 9, 10, he speaks of the Christian Hebrews as having that "hope which was an anchor to their souls." The Apostle Peter, 1 Epis. i. 3, 6, 8, 9, speaks of the visible Christians he wrote to, as being "begotten to a lively hope, of an inheritance incorruptible, &c. Wherein they greatly rejoiced," &c. And even the members of the church of Laodicea, the very worst of all the seven churches of Asia, yet looked upon themselves as truly gracious persons, and made that profession; they said, "*they* were rich, and increased in goods, and knew not that they were wretched and miserable," &c. Rev. iii. 17.

It is also evident, that the members of these primitive churches had this judgment one of another, and of the members of the visible church of Christ in general. In 1 Thess. iv. 13, &c., the apostle exhorts the Christian Thessalonians, in mourning for their deceased friends who were visible Christians, *not to sorrow* as the hopeless Heathen were wont to do for their departed friends; and that upon this consideration, that they had reason to expect to meet them again in glorious circumstances at the day of judgment, never to part more. The ground of comfort concerning their dead friends, which the apostle here speaks of, is evidently something *more* than such a hope as it may be supposed we ought to have of all that profess Christian doctrines, and are not *scandalous* in life, whom we must forbear to censure, because we do not know but they are true saints. The members of the church of Sardis, next to Laodicea, the worst of the seven churches of Asia, yet *had a name that they lived;* though Christ, who speaks of these seven churches from heaven, in the character of the Searcher of Hearts (see Rev. ii. 23), explicitly tells them that they were dead; perhaps all in a dead frame, and the most in a dead state.

These things evidently show, how all the Christian churches through the world were constituted in those days; and what sort of *holiness* or *saintship* it was, that all visible Christians in good standing had a *visibility* and *profession* of, in that apostolic age; and also what sort of visibility of this they had, viz., not only that which gave them right to a kind of negative charity, or freedom from censure, but that which might justly induce a positive judgment in their favor. The churches that these epistles were written to, were all the principal churches in the world; some of them very large, as the churches of Corinth and Ephesus. Some of the epistles were directed to all the churches through large countries where the gospel had had great success, as the epistle to the Galatians. The epistle to the Hebrews was written to all the Jewish Christians in the land of Canaan, in distinction from the Jews that lived in other countries,

who were called Hellenists or Grecians, because they generally spake the Greek tongue. The epistles of Peter were written to all the Christian Jews through many countries, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; where were great numbers of Jews, beyond any other Gentile countries. The epistle of James was directed to all Christian Jews, scattered abroad through the whole world. The epistles of John and Jude, for aught appears in those epistles, were directed to all visible Christians through the whole world. And the Apostle Paul directs the first epistle to the Corinthians, not only to the members of that church, but to all professing Christians through the face of the earth. 1 Cor. i. 2, and chap. xiv. 33, speaking of the churches in general, he calls them *all churches of the saints.* And by what Christ says to the churches of Sardis and Laodicea in the Apocalypse, of whom more evil is said than of any Christian churches spoken of in the New Testament, it appears that even the members of those churches looked on themselves as in a state of salvation, and had such a name with others.

Here possibly some may object, and say, it will not follow from the apostles speaking to and of the members of the primitive church after the manner which has been observed, as though they supposed them to be *gracious* persons, that therefore a *profession* and *appearance* of this was looked upon in those days as a requisite *qualification* for admission into the visible church; because another reason may be given for it, viz., Such was the *extraordinary* state of things at that day, that it so came to pass, that the *greater part* of those converted from Heathenism and Judaism to Christianity, were *hopefully gracious persons*, by reason of its being a day of such large communications of divine grace, and such great and unavoidable sufferings of professors, &c. And the apostles knowing those facts, might properly speak to, and of the churches, as if they were societies of truly gracious persons, because there was just ground on such accounts, to think the greater part of them to be so; although no profession or visibility of this was requisite in their members by the *constitution* of those churches, and the door of admission was as open for *others* as for such.

But it will appear, this cannot be a satisfactory nor true account of the matter, if we consider the following things.

(1.) The apostles in the very *superscription* or direction of their letters to these churches, and in their *salutations* at the beginning of their epistles, speak of them as gracious persons. For instance, the Apostle Peter, in the direction of his first letter to all professing Jewish Christians through many countries, says thus: "To the strangers scattered through Pontus, &c., elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." And in directing his second epistle to the same persons, he says thus: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us," &c. And the Apostle Paul directs his epistle to the Romans thus: "To them that be at Rome, beloved of God." So he directs his first epistle to the Corinthians thus: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus." In what sense he means *sanctified*, his following words show, ver. 4, 7, 8, 9. The same was before observed of words *annexed* to the apostle's salutations, in the beginning of several of the epistles. This shows that the apostles extend this *character* as far as they do the *epistles* themselves. Which surely would be very improper, and not agreeable to truth, if the apostles at the same time knew very well that such a character did not belong to members of churches, as such, and that they were not received into

those churches with any regard to such a character, or upon the account of any right they had to be esteemed such manner of persons. In the superscription of letters to societies of men, we are wont to give them that *title* or *denomination* which properly belongs to them as members of such a body. Thus, if one should write to the Royal Society in London, or the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, it would be proper and natural to give them the title of Learned; for whether every one of the members truly deserve the epithet, or not, yet the title is agreeable to their *profession*, and what is known to be aimed at, and is professedly insisted on, in the admission of members. But if one should write to the House of Commons, or to the East India Company, and in his superscription give them the title of Learned, this would be very improper and ill-judged; because that character does not belong to their profession *as* members of that body, and *learning* is not a qualification looked at or insisted on in their admission of members. Nor would it excuse the impropriety, though the writer might, from his special acquaintance, know it to be fact, that the greater part of them were men of learning. If one man should happen once thus to inscribe a letter to them, it would be something strange; but more strange, if he should do it from time to time, or if it should appear, by various instances, to be a custom so to direct letters to such societies; as it seems to be the manner of the apostles, in their epistles to Christian churches, to address them under titles which imply a profession and visibility of *true holiness*.

(2.) The Apostle John, in his general epistle, does very plainly manifest, that all whom he wrote to were *supposed* to have true grace, inasmuch as he declares this the qualification he has respect to in writing to them, and lets them know he writes to them for that reason, because they are supposed to be persons of the character of such as *have known God, overcome the wicked one*, and *have had their sins forgiven them*. 1 John ii. 12, 13, 14, 21.

(3.) The apostles, when speaking of such as they write to, viz., visible Christians, as a *society*, and representing what belongs to such a kind or sort of society as the visible church is, they speak of it as visibly (i. e., in profession and reputation) a *society* of gracious persons. So the Apostle Peter speaks of them as a spiritual *house*, a holy and royal *priesthood*, a holy *nation*, a peculiar *people*, a chosen or elect *generation*, called out of darkness into marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. The Apostle Paul also speaks of them as the *family* of God, Eph. ii. 19. And in the next chapter he explains himself to mean that family, a part of which is *in heaven*; i. e., they were by profession and in visibility a part of that heavenly and divine family.

(4.) The Apostle Paul speaks expressly, and from time to time, of the members of the churches he wrote to, as *all* of them in esteem and visibility truly gracious persons. Philip. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of the Lord Jesus Christ: even as it is meet for me to think this of YOU ALL" (that is, all singly taken, not collectively, according to the distinction before observed). So Gal. iv. 26, "Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us ALL." Rom. vi. 3, "AS MANY OF US as have been baptized into Christ, have been baptized into his death." Here he speaks of *all* that have been baptized; and in the continuation of the discourse, explaining what is here said, he speaks of their being "dead to sin; no longer under the law, but under grace; having obeyed the form of doctrine from the heart, being made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness," &c. Rom. xiv. 7, 8, "NONE OF US liveth to himself, and NO MAN dieth to himself" (taken together with the context);

2 Cor. iii. 18, "We ALL with open face, beholding as in a glass," &c.. and Gal. iii. 26, "Ye are ALL the children of God by faith."

(5.) It is evident, that even in those churches where the greater part of the members were not true saints, as in those degenerate churches of Sardis and Laodicea, which we may suppose were become very lax in their admissions and discipline; yet *they looked upon themselves* as truly gracious persons, and had with others the *reputation* of such.

(6.) If we should suppose, that by reason of the extraordinary state of things in that day, the apostle had reason to think the greater part of the members of churches to be true Christians, yet unless profession and appearance of true Christianity was their proper qualification, and the ground of their admission, and unless it was supposed that all of them esteemed themselves true Christians, it is altogether unaccountable that the apostles in their epistles to them never make any express particular *distinction* between those different sorts of members. If the churches were made up of persons who the apostles knew looked on themselves in so exceeding different a state, some the children of God, and others the children of the devil, some the high favorites of heaven and heirs of eternal glory, others the children of wrath, being under condemnation to eternal death, and every moment in danger of dropping into hell: I say, if this was the case, why do the apostles make no *distinction* in what they say to them or of them, in their manner of addressing them, in the things they set before them, and in the counsels, reproofs and warnings they gave them? Why do the apostles in their epistles never apply themselves or direct their speech to the *unconverted* members of the churches, in particular, in a manner tending to awaken them, and make them sensible of the miserable condition they were in, and press them to seek the converting grace of God? It is to be considered, that the Apostle Paul was very particularly acquainted with the circumstances of most of those churches he wrote to; for he had been among them, was their spiritual father, had been the instrument of gathering and founding those churches, and they had received all their instructions and directions relating to Christianity and their soul concerns from him; nor can it be questioned but that many of them had opened the case of their souls to him. And if he was sensible, that there was a number among them that made no pretensions to being in a regenerate state, and that he and others had no reason to judge them to be in such a state, he knew that the sin of such who lived in the rejection of a Saviour, even in the very house of God, in the midst of gospel light, and in violation of the most sacred vows, was peculiarly aggravated, and their guilt and state peculiarly dreadful. Why should he therefore never particularly and distinctly point his addresses to such, applying himself to them in much compassion to their souls, and putting them in mind of their awful circumstances? But instead of this, continually lumping all together, and indifferently addressing the whole body, as if they were all in happy circumstances, expressing his charity for them all, and congratulating them all in their glorious and eternal privileges; and instead of speaking to them in such a manner as should have a tendency to alarm them with a sense of danger, on the contrary, calling on all without distinction, from time to time, to rejoice? Philip. iii. 1, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." So, 2 Cor. xiii. 11, "Finally, brethren, be of good comfort." Philip. iv. 4. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice." The matter is insisted upon, as though rejoicing were a duty especially proper for them, and what they had the highest reason for. The apostle not only did not preach terror to those whom he wrote to, but is careful to guard them against fears of God's wrath; as in 1 Thess. v. at the beginning,

when the apostle there observes how that Christ will come on ungodly men 'as a thief in the night; and when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape;" he immediately uses caution, that the members of the church of Thessalonica should not take this to themselves, and be terrified, as though they were in danger; and says, in the next words, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief; ye are ALL the children of light, and the children of the day." And says, in the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ; who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another; even as also ye do." And ver. 16, he says, "Rejoice evermore." How diverse is this way of treating churches, from the method in which faithful ministers are wont to deal with their congregations, wherein are many that make no pretence to true piety, and from the way in which Mr. Stoddard was wont to deal with his congregation! And how would he have undoubtedly judged such a way of treating them the most direct course in the world eternally to undo them! And shall we determine that the Apostle Paul was one of those prophets who *daubed with untempered mortar, and sewed pillows under all arm-holes, and healed the hurt* of immortal souls *slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace*? These things make it most evident, that the primitive churches were not constituted as those modern churches, where persons knowing and owning themselves *unregenerate*, are admitted, on principle.

If it be here objected, that the apostle sometimes exhorts those that he writes to, to *put off the old man*, and *put on the new man*, and to *be renewed in the spirit of their minds*, &c., as exhorting them to seek conversion: I answer, that the meaning is manifestly but this, That they should mortify the *remains* of corruption, or the old man, and turn more and more from sin to God. Thus he exhorts the Ephesians to be *renewed*, &c., Eph. iv. 22, 23, whom yet he had before in the same epistle abundantly represented as savingly renewed already; as has been before observed. And the like might be shown of other instances.

(7.) It is a clear evidence, not only that it happened that the greater part of the members of the primitive churches were to appearance true Christians; but that they were taken in *under that notion*, and because there appeared in them grounds of such an *estimation* of them; and when any happened to be admitted that were otherwise, it was *beside their aim;* inasmuch as when others were admitted, they are represented as *brought* or *crept in unawares*. Thus the matter is represented by the apostles: Jude, verse 4, "There are certain men crept in unawares—ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." Gal. ii. 4, "False brethren, unawares brought in." If it be said, these here spoken of were openly scandalous persons and heretics: I answer, they were not openly scandalous when they were brought in; nor is there any reason to think they were heretics when admitted, though afterwards they turned apostates. Mr. Stoddard says, it does not follow that *all* hypocrites crept in unawares because some did. (*Appeal*, p. 17.) To which I would humbly say, it must be certainly true with respect to all hypocrites who were admitted, either that the church which admitted them was *aware* they were such, or else was not. If there were some of whom the church was *aware* that they were hypocrites, at the time when they were taken in, then the church, in admitting them, did not follow the *rule* that Mr. Stoddard often declares him-

self to suppose ought to be followed in admitting members, viz., to admit none but what *in a judgment of rational charity are true Christians.*—(*Appeal*, p. 2, 3, 10, 28, 23, 67, 73, 93, 94.) But that not only heretics and designing dissemblers *crept in unawares*, but that all *false brethren*, all church members not truly gracious did so, appears by such being represented as *bastards* in a family, who are false children and false heirs, brought into it *unawares*, and imposed upon the disposers of those privileges *by stealth*: Heb. xii. 8, "If ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye *bastards*, and not sons."

Thus it is abundantly manifest, from the apostolical writings, how the visible church of Christ, through the whole world, was at first constituted and ordered, under the direction of the apostles themselves, who regulated it according to the infallible guidance of the Spirit of their great Lord and Master. And doubtless, as the Christian church was constituted *then*, so it ought to be constituted *now*. What better rule have we for our ecclesiastical regulations in other respects, than what was done in the primitive churches, under the apostles' own direction; as particularly the standing officers of the church, presbyters and deacons, the method of introducing ministers in their ordination, &c. In this matter that I have insisted on, I think the Scripture is abundantly more full than in those other things.

IX. Another evidence, that such as are taken into the church, ought to be in the eye of a Christian judgment truly *gracious* or *pious* persons, is this, that the Scripture represents the *visible church* of Christ as a society having its several members united by the bond of *Christian brotherly love.*

Besides that general benevolence or charity which the saints have to mankind, and which they exercise towards both the evil and the good in common, there is a peculiar and very *distinguishing* kind of affection, that every true Christian experiences towards those whom he looks upon as truly gracious persons; whereby the soul, at least at times, is very sensibly and sweetly knit to such persons, and there is an ineffable *oneness* of *heart* with them; whereby, to use the Scripture phrase (Acts iv. 32), "They are of one heart and one soul:" which holy affection is exercised towards others on account of the spiritual image of God in them, their supposed relation to God as his children, and to Christ as his members, and to them as their spiritual brethren in Christ This sacred affection is a very good and distinguishing note of true grace, much spoken of as such in Scripture, under the name of φιλαδελφια, *the love of the brethren*, or *brotherly love;* and is called by Christ, *the receiving a righteous man in the name of a righteous man; and receiving one of Christ's little ones in the name of a disciple*, or *because he belongs to Christ* (Matt. x. 41, 42, Mark ix. 41), and a *loving one another as Christ has loved them* (John xiii. 34, and xv. 13, 14, 15). Having a peculiar image of that *oneness* which is between Christ himself and his saints. Compare John xvii. 20, to the end.

This *love* the apostles are often directing Christians to exercise towards fellow members of the visible church; as in Rom. xii. 10, "Be ye kindly affectioned one to another with *brotherly* love." The words are much more emphatical in the original, and do more lively represent that peculiar *endearment* that there is between *gracious* persons, or those that look on one another as such; τη φιλαδελφια εις αλληλους φιλοστοργοι. The expressions properly signify, *cleaving one to another with brotherly, natural, strong endearment.* With the like emphasis and energy does the Apostle Peter express himself, 1 Epis. i 22: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren (εις φιλαδελφιαν ανυποκριτον), see that ye love

one another with a pure heart fervently." Again, chap. iii. 8, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." The words in the Greek are much more significant, elegant, and forcible; *παντες ομοφρονες, συμπαθεις, φιλαδελφοι, ευσπλαγχνοι, φιλοφρονες* The same peculiar endearment the apostle has doubtless respect to in chap. iv., "Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves." The Apostle Paul in his epistles, from time to time, speaks of the visible saints whom he writes to, as being united one to another with this affection, and considers it as a note of their piety. Col. i. 4, "We heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all saints." 1 Thess. iv. 9, "As touching BROTHERLY LOVE, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." So Philem. 5, "Hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and towards all saints." And this is what he exhorts to, Heb. xiii. 1, "Let BROTHERLY LOVE continue." 1 Thess. v 26, "Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss." Compare 1 Cor. xvi 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12, and 1 Pet. v. 14.

This *φιλαδελφια*, or *love to the brethren*, is that virtue which the Apostle John so much insists on in his first epistle, as one of the most distinguishing characteristics of true grace, and a peculiar evidence that *God dwelleth in us*, and *we in God* By which must needs be understood a love to saints *as* saints, or on account of the spiritual image of God supposed to be in them, and their spiritual relation to God; according as it has always been understood by orthodox divines. No reasonable doubt can be made, but that the Apostle John in this epistle, has respect to the same sort of love, which Christ prescribes to his disciples, in that which he called by way of eminency HIS COMMANDMENT, and *his* NEW COMMANDMENT, which he gave as a great *mark* of their being truly his *disciples*, as this same apostle gives an account in his gospel; and to which he plainly refers, when speaking of *the love of the brethren* in his epistle, chap. ii. 7, 8, and iii. 23. But that *love*, which Christ speaks of in his *new commandment*, is spoken of as between those that CHRIST *loves*, or is supposed *to love;* and which has *his love* to them for its ground and pattern. And if this *φιλαδελφια*, this *love of the brethren*, so much spoken of by Christ, and by the Apostles Paul and John, be not that *peculiar* affection which gracious persons or true saints have one to another, which is so great a part, and so remarkable an exercise of true grace, *where* is it spoken of, at all, in the New Testament?

We see how often the apostles exhort visible Christians to exercise this affection to all other members of the visible church of Christ, and how often they speak of the members of the visible church, as actually thus *united* in places already mentioned. In 2 Cor. ix. 14, the apostle speaks of the members of *other* churches *loving* the members of the church of Corinth, with this peculiar endearment and oneness of heart, for *the grace of God in them:* "And by their prayer for you, which long after you, for the exceeding grace of God in you." The word translated *long after*, is *επιποθουντων*; which properly signifies to love with an *exceeding* and *dear* love. And this is represented as the *bond*, that unites all the members of the visible church: Acts iv. 32, "And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and one soul." This is the same thing which elsewhere is called being of *one mind:* 1 Pet. iii. 8, "Finally, be ye all of one mind." And being of *the same mind:* 1 Cor. i. 10, "That ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind." And Philip. iv. 2, "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be OF THE SAME MIND in the Lord." And being *like-minded* (the word is the same in Greek): Rom. xv. 5, 6, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be LIKE-MINDED one towards

another; that ye may with *one mind*, and one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." There is reason to think, that it is this *oneness of mind*, or being *of one heart and soul*, is meant by that *charity* which the apostle calls the *bond of perfectness*, Col. iii. 14; and represents as the bond of union between all the *members* of the *body*, in Eph. iv. 15, 16: "But speaking the truth in LOVE, may grow up into him in all things which is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body FITLY JOINED TOGETHER, AND COMPACTED by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in LOVE."

Herein seems much to consist the nature of *scandal* in the members of a church,, viz., such an offence as is a wound and interruption to this kind of *affection*, being a stumbling-block to a Christian judgment, in regard to its esteem of the offender as a *real Christian*, and what much lessens the visibility of his Christian character. And therefore when scandal is removed by visible *repentance*, the church is directed to *confirm their love* to the offender, 2 Cor. ii. 8

Now this intimate affection towards others as *brethren in Christ* and *fellow members* of him, must have some apprehension of the understanding, some judgment of the mind, for its foundation. To say, that we must thus *love* others as visible members of Christ, if any thing *else* be meant, than that we must love them because they are visibly, or *as* they appear to our judgment, real members of Christ, is in effect to say, that we must thus love them without any foundation at all. In order to a real and fervent affection to another, on account of some amiableness of qualification or relation, the mind must first judge there is that amiableness in the object. The affections of the mind are not so at command that we can make them strongly to go forth to an object *as* having such loveliness, when at the same time we do not positively *judge* any such thing concerning them, but only *hope* it may be so, because we see no sufficient reason to determine the contrary. There must be a *positive* dictate of the understanding, and some degree of satisfaction of the judgment, to be a ground of that *oneness of heart and soul* which is agreeable to Scripture representations of φιλαδελφια, or *brotherly love*. And a supposition only of that *moral sincerity and virtue*, or *common grace*, which some insist upon, though it may be a sufficient ground of *neighborly* and *civil* affection, cannot be a sufficient ground of this intimate affection to them as *brethren* in the family of a heavenly Father, this fervent love to them *in the bowels of Jesus Christ;* that implying nothing in it inconsistent with being *gospel sinners* and domestic *enemies* in the house of God; which Christians know are the most hateful enemies to Christ, of all the enemies that he has.

It is a thing well agreeing with the wisdom of Christ, and that peculiar favor he has manifested to his saints, and with his dealings with them in many other respects, to suppose, he has made a provision in his institutions, that they might have the comfort of uniting, with such as their hearts are united with in that holy intimate affection which has been spoken of, in special religious exercises and duties of worship, and visible intercourse with their Redeemer, joining with those concerning whom they can have some satisfaction of mind, that they are cordially united with them in adoring and expressing their *love* to their common Lord and Saviour, that they may *with one mind, with one heart, and one soul*, as well as *with one mouth, glorify him;* as in the forementioned Rom. xv. 5, 6, compared with Acts iv. 32. This seems to be what this heavenly affection naturally inclines to. And how eminently fit and proper for this purpose is the sacrament of the *Lord's supper*, the Christian church's great feast of *love;* wherein Christ's people sit together as *brethren* in the family

of God, at their Father's table, to feast on the love of their Redeemer, commemorating his sufferings for them, and his dying love to them, and sealing *their* love to him and one another?—It is hardly credible, that Christ has so ordered things as that there are no instituted social acts of worship, wherein *his saints* are to manifest their respect to him, but such as wherein they ordinarily are obliged (*if the rule for admissions be carefully attended*) to join with the society of fellow worshippers, concerning whom they have no reason to think but that the *greater part* of them are *unconverted* (and are more provoking enemies to that Lord they love and adore, than most of the very Heathen), which Mr. Stoddard supposes to be the case with the members of the visible church. *Appeal* p. 16.

X. It is necessary that those who partake of the *Lord's supper*, should *judge themselves* truly and cordially to *accept* CHRIST, as their only Saviour and chief good; for this is what the *actions*, which communicants perform at the Lord's table, are a solemn *profession* of.

There is in the Lord's supper a mutual solemn *profession* of the two parties transacting the covenant of grace, and visibly united in that covenant; the Lord Christ by his minister, on the one hand, and the communicants (who are professing believers) on the other. The administrator of the ordinance acts in the quality of Christ's minister, acts in his name, as representing him; and stands in the place where Christ himself stood at the first administration of this sacrament, and in the original institution of the ordinance. Christ, by the speeches and actions of the minister, makes a solemn profession of his part in the covenant of grace: he exhibits the sacrifice of his body broken and his blood shed; and in the minister's offering the sacramental bread and wine to the communicants, Christ presents himself to the believing communicants, as their propitiation and bread of life; and by these outward signs confirms and seals his sincere engagements to be their Saviour and food, and to impart to them all the benefits of his propitiation and salvation. And they, in receiving what is offered, and eating and drinking the symbols of Christ's body and blood, also profess their part in the covenant of grace: they profess to embrace the promises and lay hold of the hope set before them, to receive the atonement, to receive Christ as their spiritual food, and to feed upon him in their hearts by faith. Indeed what is professed on both sides is the *heart:* for Christ in offering himself, professes the willingness of *his heart* to be theirs who truly receive him, and the communicants on their part, profess the willingness of *their hearts* to receive him, which they declare by significant actions. They profess to take Christ as their spiritual food, and bread of life. To accept Christ as our *bread of life*, is to accept him *as our Saviour and portion;* as food is both the means of preserving life, and is also the refreshment and comfort of life. The signification of the word *manna*, that great type of this bread of life, is a *portion*. That which God offers to us as our food, he offers as our portion; and that which we accept as our food, we accept as our portion. Thus the Lord's supper is plainly a *mutual* renovation, confirmation, and seal of the covenant of grace. Both the covenanting parties *profess* their consent to their respective parts in the covenant, and each affixes his *seal* to his profession. And there is in this ordinance the very same thing acted over in profession and sensible signs, which is spiritually transacted between Christ and his spouse in the covenant that unites them. Here we have from time to time the glorious *bridegroom* exhibiting himself with his great love that is stronger than death, appearing clothed in robes of grace, and engaging himself with all his glory and love, and its infinite benefits, to be theirs who receive him: and here we

have his *spouse* accepting this bridegroom, choosing him for her friend, her only Saviour and portion, and relying on him for all his benefits. And thus the covenant transaction of this spiritual marriage is confirmed and sealed, from time to time. The *actions* of the communicants at the Lord's table have as expressive and significant a language, as the most solemn words. When a person in this ordinance *takes* and *eats* and *drinks* those things which represent Christ, the plain meaning and implicit profession of these his actions, is this: "I take this crucified Jesus as my Saviour, my sweetest food, my chief portion, and the life of my soul, consenting to acquiesce in him as such, and to hunger and thirst after him only, renouncing all other saviours, and all other portions for his sake." The actions, *thus interpreted*, are a proper renovation and ratification of the covenant of grace; and no otherwise. And those that take, and eat and drink the sacramental elements at the Lord's table with any *other* meaning, I fear, *know not what they do.*

The *actions* at the Lord's supper, thus implying in their nature and signification, a renewing and confirming of the covenant, there is a declarative explicit covenanting supposed to *precede* it; which is the *profession* of religion, before spoken of, that qualifies a person for admission to the Lord's supper. And there doubtless is, or ought to be, as much explicitly professed in *words*, as is implicitly professed in these *actions;* for by these significant actions, the communicant sets his seal but to his profession. The established signs in the Lord's supper are fully equivalent to words; they are a renewing and reiterating the same thing which was done *before;* only with this difference, that now it is done by *speaking signs*, whereas before it was by *speaking sounds.* Our taking the bread and wine is as much a *professing* to accept of Christ, at least, as a woman's taking a *ring* of the bridegroom in her marriage is a profession and seal of her taking him for her husband. The sacramental elements in the Lord's supper do represent Christ as a party in covenant, as truly as a *proxy* represents a prince to a foreign lady in her marriage; and our taking those elements is as truly a professing to accept Christ, as in the other case the lady's taking the proxy is her professing to accept the prince as her husband. Or the matter may more fitly be represented by this similitude: it is as if a prince should send an ambassador to a woman in a foreign land, proposing marriage, and by his ambassador should send her his *picture*, and should desire her to manifest her acceptance of his suit, not only by professing her acceptance in words to his ambassador, but in token of her sincerity openly to take or accept that picture, and so seal her profession, by thus representing the matter over again by a symbolical action.

To suppose, persons ought thus solemnly to *profess* that which at the same time they do not at all imagine they experience in themselves, and do not really pretend to, is a very great absurdity. For a man sacramentally to make *such a profession of religion*, proceeding avowedly on the foot of *such doctrine*, is to profess that which he *does not* profess; his actions being no established signs of the thing supposed to be professed, nor carrying in them the least pretension to it. And therefore doing thus can be no man's duty; unless it be men's duty to make a solemn profession of that which in truth they make *no* profession of The Lord's supper is most evidently a *professing* ordinance; and the communicants' *profession* must be such as is adjusted to the nature and design of the ordinance; which nothing short of *faith in the blood of Christ* will answer, even *faith unfeigned*, which *worketh by love.* A profession therefore exclusive of this, is essentially defective, and quite unsuitable to the character of a *communicant*

XI. When the apostle says, 1 Cor. xi. 28, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," it seems to be much the most reasonable to understand it of *trying himself* with regard to the *truth* of his *Christianity*, or reality of his grace; the same which the same apostle directs the same Corinthians to in his other epistle, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, where the same word is used in the original The Greek word (δοκιμαζετω) will not allow of what some have supposed to be the apostle's meaning, viz., that a man should consider and inquire into his circumstances, and the necessities of his case, that he may know what are the wants he should go to the Lord's table for a supply of. The word properly signifies *proving* or *trying* a thing with respect to its *quality* and *goodness*, or in order to determine whether it be *true* and *of the right sort*. And so the word is always used in the New Testament; unless that sometimes it is used as it were metonymically, and in such places is variously translated, either *discerning*, or *allowing*, *approving*, *liking*, &c., these being the effects of *trial*. Nor is the word used more frequently in the New Testament for any of trial whatever, than for the trial of professors with regard to their *grace* or *piety*. The word (as Dr. Ames in his Catecheseos Sciagraphia, and Mr. Willard in his Body of Divinity, observe) is borrowed from goldsmiths, properly signifying the *trial* they make of their silver and gold, whether it be *genuine* or *counterfeit*: and with a manifest allusion to this original application of the word, is often used in the New Testament for a *trying* the piety of professors. It is used with this view in all the following texts: 1 Pet. i. 7, "That the TRIAL of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be TRIED by fire, might be found unto praise," &c. 1 Cor. iii. 13, "The fire shall TRY every man's work of what sort it is." James i. 3, "The TRYING of your faith worketh patience." 1 Thess. ii. 4, "God who TRIETH our hearts." The same word is used in 2 Cor. viii. 8, "To PROVE the sincerity of your love." So Gal. vi. 3, 4, "If any man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself: but let every man PROVE his own work." In all these places there is the same word in the Greek with that in the text now under consideration.

When the apostle directs professing Christians to *try themselves*, using this word indefinitely, as properly signifying the examining or proving a thing whether it be *genuine* or *counterfeit*, the most natural construction of his advice is, that they should *try themselves* with respect to their spiritual state and religious profession, whether they are *disciples indeed*, real and genuine Christians, or whether they are not false and hypocritical professors. As if a man should bring a piece of metal that had the color of gold, with the impress of the king's coin, to a goldsmith, and desire him to *try* that money, without adding any words to limit his meaning, would not the goldsmith naturally understand, that he was to try whether it was true gold, or true money, yea or no?

But here it is said by some, that the *context* of the passage under debate (1 Cor. xi. 28) does plainly *limit* the meaning of the word in that place; the apostle there speaking of those things that had appeared among the communicants at Corinth, which were of a *scandalous* nature, so doubtless unfitting them for the Lord's supper; and therefore when the apostle directs them to *examine* or prove themselves, it is but just, to suppose his meaning to be, that they should try whether they be not disqualified by *scandal*. To this I answer, though the apostle's putting the Corinthians upon trying themselves, was on *occasion* of the mentioning some scandalous practices found among them, yet this is by no means any argument of its being only his meaning, that they should *try themselves* whether they were *scandalous* persons; and not that they

should try whether they were *true, genuine Christians.* The very nature of *scandal* (as was observed before) is that which tends to obscure the visibility of the piety of professors, and wound others' charity towards them, by bringing the reality of their grace into doubt; and therefore what could be more natural, than for the Apostle, when mentioning such scandals among the Corinthians, to put them upon trying the state of their souls, and proving their sincerity? This is certainly the case in this apostle's directing the same persons to *prove themselves,* 2 Cor. xiii. 5, using the same word there, which he uses here, and giving his direction on the like occasion. For in the second epistle (as well as in the first) his putting them on *examining* and *proving themselves,* was on occasion of his mentioning some *scandals* found among them; as is plain from the foregoing context. And yet there it is expressly said, that the thing concerning which he directs them to *prove* themselves is, whether they be *in the faith,* and whether *Christ is in them.* Nor is there any thing more in the preceding context of one place, than in that of the other, obliging or leading us to understand the apostle to intend only a trying whether they were *scandalous,* and not whether they were sincere Christians.

And as to the words following in the next verse, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body;" these words by no means make it evident (as some hold) that what the apostle would have them examine themselves about, is whether they have *doctrinal knowledge,* sufficient to understand, that the bread and wine in the sacrament signify the body and blood of Christ. But on the contrary, to interpret the apostle in this sense only, is unreasonable upon several accounts. (1.) None can so much as go about such an *examination,* without first knowing, that the Lord's body and blood *is signified* by these elements. For merely a man's putting this question to himself, *Do I understand that this bread and this wine signify the body and blood of Christ?* supposes him already to know it from previous information; and therefore to exhort persons to go about such an examination, would be absurd. And then (2), it is incredible, that there should be any such *gross ignorance* appearing in a number of the communicants in the Corinthian church, if we consider what the Scripture informs us concerning that church. As particularly, if we consider what an able and thorough instructor and spiritual father they had had, even the Apostle Paul, who founded that church, brought them out of their Heathenish darkness, and initiated them in the Christian religion, and had instructed them in the nature and ends of gospel ordinances, and continued at Corinth, constantly laboring in word and doctrine for a long while together, no less than *a year and six months;* and, as we may well suppose, administering the Lord's supper among them every Lord's day; for the apostle speaks of it as the manner of that church, to communicate at the Lord's table with such frequency, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. And the Corinthian church, at that day, when the apostle wrote this epistle, was a church noted for excelling in *doctrinal knowledge;* as is evident by chap. i. 5, 6, 7, and several other passages in the epistle. Besides, the communicants were expressly told at every communion, every week, when the bread and wine were delivered to them in the administration, that that bread signified the body, and that wine signified the blood of Christ. And then besides (3), the apostle by his argument, chap. x. 16, supposes the Corinthians doctrinally acquainted with this subject already. It therefore appears to me much more reasonable, to apprehend the case to be thus. The offensive behavior of the communicants at Corinth gave the apostle reason to suspect, that some of them came to the Lord's table without a proper impression and true sense of the great and

glorious things there signified; having no habitual hunger or relish for the spiritual food there represented, no inward, vital and experimental taste for that *flesh of the Son of Man*, which is *meat indeed*. The word translated *discerning*, signifies to *discriminate* or *distinguish*. The *taste* is the proper sense whereby to discern or distinguish food, Job. xxxiv. 3. And it is a spiritual *sense* or *taste* which is that whereby we discern or distinguish spiritual food. Heb. v. 14, "Those who by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil;" *προς διακρισιν*, &c. A word of the same root with that rendered *discerning*, in 1 Cor. xi. 29. He that has no habitual appetite to and relish of that spiritual food, which is represented and offered at the Lord's table; he that has no spiritual taste, wherewith to perceive any thing more at the Lord's supper, than in common food; or that has no higher view, than with a little seeming devotion to eat bread, as it were in the way of an ordinance, but without regarding in his heart the spiritual meaning and end of it, and without being suitably affected with the dying love of Christ therein commemorated; such a one may most truly and properly be said *not to discern the Lord's body*. When therefore the apostle exhorts to *self-examination* as a preparative for the sacramental supper, he may well be understood to put professors upon inquiring whether they have such a principle of *faith*, by means whereof they are habitually in a capacity and disposition of mind to *discern the Lord's body* practically and spiritually (as well as speculatively and notionally) in their communicating at the Lord's table. Which is what none can do who have but common grace, or a faith short of that which is justifying and saving. It is only a living faith that capacitates men to *discern the Lord's body* in the sacrament with that spiritual sensation or spiritual gust, which is suitable to the nature and design of the ordinance, and which the apostle seems principally to intend.

PART THIRD.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Objection I.

The Scripture calls the members of the visible church by the name of *disciples*, *scholars*, or *learners*; and that suggests to us this notion of the visible church, that it is the *school* of Christ, into which persons are admitted in order to their *learning of Christ*, and coming to spiritual attainments, in the use of the means of teaching, discipline, and training up, established in the school. Now if this be a right notion of the visible church, then reason shows that no other qualifications are necessary in order to a being members of this *school*, than such a *faith* and *disposition of mind* as are requisite to persons putting themselves under Christ as their *Master* and *Teacher*, and subjecting themselves to the *orders* of the school. But a *common faith* and *moral sincerity* are sufficient for this. Therefore the Scripture leads us to suppose the visible church to be *properly constituted* of those who have these qualifications, though they have not *saving faith* and *true piety*.

Answer. I own, the Scripture calls the members of the visible church by the name of *disciples*. But I deny it *therefore* follows that the church which

they are members of, is duly and properly constituted of those who have not true piety. Because if this consequence was good, then it would equally follow, that not only the *visible*, but also the *invisible* or *mystical* church is properly constituted of those who have not unfeigned faith and true piety. For the members of the mystical church, *as such*, and to denote the special character of such, are called *disciples*, in Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33, and in John viii. 31, and xiii. 35, and xv. 8. This shows, that in the argument I am answering, there is no connection between the premises and the conclusion. For the force of the objection consists in this, that the members of the visible church are called *disciples* in Scripture: this is the sum total of the premises: and if there be any connection between the premises and the conclusion, it must lie in the truth of this proposition: *The church, whose members are called by the name of* disciples, *as signifying their state and quality as members of that society, that church is properly and fitly constituted, not only of persons truly pious, but of others that have merely a common faith and virtue.* But this proposition, we have seen, is not true; and so there is no connection between the former and latter part of it, which are the same with the premises and conclusion of this argument.

2. Though I do not deny, that the visible church of Christ may fitly be represented as a school of Christ, where persons are trained up in the use of means, in order to *some* spiritual attainments: yet it will not hence necessarily follow, that this is in order to *all* good attainments; for it will not follow but that certain good attainments may be *prerequisite*, in order to a *place* in the school. The church of Christ is a school appointed for the training up Christ's *little children*, to greater degrees of knowledge, higher privileges, and greater serviceableness in this world, and more of a meetness for the possession of their eternal inheritance. But there is no necessity of supposing that it is in order to fit them to become Christ's children, or to be introduced into his family; any more than there is a necessity of supposing, because a prince puts his children under tutors, that therefore it must be in order to their attaining to be of the royal family. If it be necessary, that there should be a church of Christ appointed as a school of instruction and discipline, to bring persons to *all* good attainments whatsoever, then it will follow, that there must be a visible church constituted of *scandalous* and *profane* persons and *heretics*, and all in common that assume the Christian name, that so means may be used with them in order to bring them to *moral sincerity*, and an acknowledgment of the Christian faith.

3. I grant, that no other qualifications are necessary in order to bring members of that school of Christ which is his visible church, than such as are requisite in order to *their subjecting themselves to Christ as their Master and Teacher*, and *subjecting themselves to the laws and orders of his school*: nevertheless I deny that a *common faith*, and *moral sincerity* are sufficient for this; because none do truly subject themselves to Christ *as their Master*, but such as, having their hearts *purified by faith*, are delivered from the reigning power of sin: for we cannot subject ourselves to obey *two* contrary *masters* at the same time. None do submit to Christ as their *Teacher*, but those who truly receive him as their Prophet, to teach them by his word and Spirit; giving up themselves to his teachings, *sitting* with *Mary*, as little children, at *Jesus' feet to hear his word;* and hearkening more to his dictates, than those of their blind and deceitful lusts, and relying on his wisdom more than their own. The Scripture knows nothing of an ecclesiastical school constituted of *enemies of the cross of Christ*, and appointed to bring such to be reconciled to him and submit to him as their Master. Neither have they who are not truly pious persons, any true disposition

of heart to submit to the *laws* and *orders* of Christ's school, the rules which his word prescribes to all his scholars; such as, to *love their Master* supremely; *to love one another as brethren;* and *to love their book*, i. e., their Bible, more than vain trifles and amusements, yea, above gold and silver; *to be faithful to the interest of the Master, and of the school; to depend on his teachings;* to *cry to him for knowledge; above all their gettings, to get understanding*, &c.

4. Whatever ways of constituting the church may to us seem fit, proper, and reasonable, the *question* is, not what constitution of Christ's church seems convenient to *human* wisdom, but what constitution is actually established by Christ's infinite wisdom. Doubtless, if men should set their wits to work, and proceed according to what seems good in their sight, they would greatly alter Christ's constitution of his church, to make it more convenient and beautiful, and would adorn it with a vast variety of ingenious inventions; as the church of Rome has done. The question is, whether this *school* of Christ, which they talk of, made up very much of those who pretend to no experience or attainments but what consist with their being *enemies* of Christ in their hearts, and who in reality love the vilest lust better than him, be that church of Christ which in the New Testament is denominated *his city, his temple, his family, his body*, &c., by which names the visible church of Christ is there frequently called?

I acknowledge, that *means*, of Christ's appointment, are to be used with those who are Christ's enemies, and do not profess themselves any other, to change their *hearts*, and bring them to be Christ's *friends* and *disciples*. Such means are to be used with all sorts of persons, with Jews, Mahometans, Heathens, with nominal Christians that are heretical or vicious, the profane, the intemperate, the unclean, and all other enemies of Christ; and these means to be used constantly, and laboriously. Scandalous persons need to go to *school*, to learn to be Christians, as much as other men. And there are many persons that are not *morally sincere*, who, from selfish and sinister views, do consent ordinarily to go to church, and so be in the way of the use of means. And none ought to forbid them thus going to Christ's *school*, that they may be taught by him in the ministry of the gospel. But yet it will not follow, that such a *school* is the *church* of CHRIST. Human laws can put persons, even those who are very vicious, into the *school* of Christ, in that sense; they can oblige them constantly to be present at public teaching, and attend on the means of grace appointed by Christ, and dispensed in his name: but human laws cannot join men to the *church* of Christ, and make them members of his body.

Objection II.

Visible *saintship* in the Scripture sense cannot be the same with that which has been supposed and insisted on, viz., a being in the eye of a rational charity truly pious; because Israel of old were from time to time called *God's people*, when it is certain the greater part of them were far from having any *such* visible holiness as this. Thus the *ten tribes* were called God's people, Hosea iv. 6, after they had revolted from the true worship of God, and had obstinately continued in their idolatrous worship at Bethel and Dan for about two hundred and fifty years, and were at that time, a little before their captivity especially, in the height of their wickedness. So the Jews are called *God's people*, in Ezek. xxxvi. 20, and other places, at the time of their captivity in Babylon; a time when most of them were abandoned to all kinds of the most horrid and open impieties, as the prophets frequently represent. Now it is certain that the peo-

ple at that time were not called *God's people*, because of any visibility of true piety to the eye of reason or of a rational charity, because most of them were grossly wicked, and declared their sin as Sodom. And in the same manner wherein the Jews of old were God's people, are the members of the visible Christian Gentile church God's people; for they are spoken of as *grafted into the same olive tree*, from whence the former were *broken off by unbelief*.

ANSWER. The argument proves too much, and therefore nothing at all. If those whom I oppose in this controversy, bring this objection, they will in effect as much oppose themselves in it as me. The objection, if it have any force, equally militates against their and my notion of visible saintship. For those Jews which it is alleged were called God's people, and yet were so notoriously, openly, and obstinately wicked, had neither any visibility of true piety, nor yet of that moral sincerity in the profession and duties of the true religion, which the opponents themselves suppose to be requisite in order to a proper visible holiness, and a due admission to the privileges and ordinances of the church of God. None will pretend that these obstinate idolaters and impious wretches had those qualifications which are now requisite in order to an admission to the Christian sacraments. And therefore to what purpose can they bring this objection? Which, if it proves any thing, overthrows my scheme and their own both together, and both in an equally effectual manner; and not only so, but will thoroughly destroy the scheme of all *Protestants* through the world concerning the qualifications of the subjects of Christian ordinances. And therefore the support of what I have laid down against those whom I oppose in this controversy, requires no further answer to this objection. Nevertheless for the greater satisfaction, I would here observe further:

That such appellations as God's *people*, God's *Israel*, and some other like phrases, are used and applied in Scripture with considerable *diversity* of intention. Thus, we have a plain distinction between the *house of Israel*, and the *house of Israel*, in Ezek. xx. 38, 39, 40. By the house of *Israel*, in the 39th verse, is meant literally the nation or family of *Israel*: but by the house of *Israel* in the 40th verse, seems to be intended the *spiritual house*, the body of God's visible saints, that should attend the ordinances of his public worship in gospel times. So likewise there is a distinction made between the *house of Israel*, and *God's disciples*, who should profess and visibly adhere *to his law and testimony*, in Isa. viii. 14—17. And though the whole nation of the Jews are often called *God's people* in those degenerate times wherein the prophets were sent to reprove them, yet at the same time they are charged as *falsely calling themselves of the holy city*, Isa. xlviii. 2. And God often tells them, they are rather to be reckoned among aliens, and to be looked upon as children of the Ethiopians, or of the posterity of the ancient Canaanites, on account of their grossly wicked and scandalous behavior. See Amos ix. 7, 8, &c., Ezek. xvi. 2, 3, &c., verses 45, 46, &c., Isa. i. 10.

It is evident that God sometimes, according to the methods of his marvellous mercy, and long-suffering towards mankind, has a merciful respect to a degenerate church, that is become exceeding corrupt in regard that it is constituted of members who have not those qualifications which ought to be insisted on: God continues still to have respect to them so far as not utterly to forsake them, or wholly to deny his confirmation of, and blessing on their administrations And not being utterly renounced of God, their administrations are to be looked upon as in some respect valid, and the society as in some sort a people or church of God: which was the case with the church of Rome, at least till the Reformation and Council of Trent; for till then we must own their baptisms and or-

dinations to be valid.—The church that the pope sits in, is called, *The Temple of God*, 2. Thess. ii. 4.

And with regard to the people of Israel, it is very manifest, that something diverse is oftentimes intended by that nation's being *God's people*, from their being visible saints, or visibly holy, or having those qualifications which are requisite in order to a due admission to the ecclesiastical privileges of such. That *nation*, that *family of Israel, according to the flesh*, and *with regard to that external and carnal qualification*, were in some sense adopted by God to be his *peculiar people*, and his *covenant people*. This is not only evident by what has been already observed, but also indisputably manifest from Rom. ix. 3, 4, 5, "I have great heaviness and sorrow of heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the ADOPTION, and the glory and the COVENANTS, and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the PROMISES; whose are the fathers; and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came." It is to be noted, that the privileges here mentioned are spoken of as belonging to the Jews, not now as visible saints, not as professors of true religion, not as members of the visible church of Christ; but only as people of *such a nation*, such a blood, such an external and carnal relation to the patriarchs, their ancestors, *Israelites*, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH. For the apostle is speaking here of the *unbelieving Jews*, professed unbelievers, that were out of the Christian church, and open visible enemies to it, and such as had no right to the external privileges of Christ's people. So, in Rom. xi. 28, 29, the apostle speaks of the same *unbelieving Jews*, as in some respect an *elect people*, and interested in the *calling*, *promises*, and *covenants* God formerly gave to their forefathers, and as still *beloved* for their sakes. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." These things are in these places spoken of, not as privileges belonging to the Jews now as a people of the right religion, or in the true church of visible worshippers of God; but as a people of such a pedigree or blood; and that even after the ceasing of the Mosaic administration. But these were privileges more especially belonging to them under the Old Testament: they were a *family* that God had chosen in distinction from all others, to show special favor to, above all other *nations*. It was manifestly agreeable to God's design to constitute things so under the Old Testament, that the means of grace and spiritual privileges and blessings should be, though not wholly, yet in a great measure confined to a *particular family*, much more than those privileges and blessings are confined to any posterity or blood now under the gospel. God did purposely so order things that *that nation* should by these favors be distinguished, not only from those who were not professors of the worship of the true God, but also in a great measure *from other nations*, by a wall of separation that he made. This was not merely a wall of separation, between professors and non-professors (such a wall of separation as this remains still in the days of the gospel), but between NATION and NATIONS. God, if he pleases, may by his sovereignty annex his blessing, and in some measure fix it, for his own reasons, to a particular blood, as well as to a particular place or spot of ground, to a certain building, to a particular heap of stones, or altar of brass, to particular garments, and other external things. And it is evident, that he actually did affix his blessing to that particular external family of Jacob, very much as he did to the city of Jerusalem, that he chose to place his name there, and to Mount Zion, *where he commanded the blessing* God did not affix his blessing to Jerusalem or Mount Zion, as to limit himself

either by confining the blessing wholly to that place, never to bestow it elsewhere; nor by obliging himself always to bestow it on those that sought him there; nor yet obliging himself never to withdraw his blessing from thence, by forsaking his dwelling place there, and leaving it to be a common or profane place; but he was pleased so to annex his blessing to that place, as to make it the seat of his blessing in a peculiar manner, in great distinction from other places. In like manner did he fix his blessing to that blood or progeny of Jacob. It was a family which he delighted in, and which he blessed in a peculiar manner, and to which he in a great measure confined the blessing; but not so as to limit himself, or so as to oblige himself to bestow it on all of that blood, or not to bestow it on others that were not of that blood. He affixed his blessing to both these, both to the place and nation, by sovereign election, Psal. cxxxii 13, 14, 15. He annexed and fixed his blessing to both by covenant. To that nation he fixed his blessing by his covenant with the patriarchs. Indeed the main thing, the substance and marrow of that covenant which God made with Abraham and the other patriarchs, was the *covenant of grace*, which is continued in these days of the gospel, and extends to all his spiritual seed of the Gentiles as well as Jews: but yet that covenant with the patriarchs contained other things that were as it were appendages to that great everlasting covenant of grace, promises of lesser matters, subservient to the grand promise of the future seed, and typical of things appertaining to him. Such were those promises that annexed the blessing to a particular country, viz., the land of Canaan, and a peculiar *blood*, viz., the progeny of Isaac and Jacob. Just so it was also as to the covenant God made with David that we have an account of, 2 Sam vii. and Psal. cxxxii. If we consider that covenant with regard to what the soul and marrow of it was, it was the covenant of grace: but there were other promises which were as it were appendages of things subservient to the grand covenant, and typical of its benefits; such were promises of the blessing to the nation of the literal Israel, and of continuing the temporal crown of Israel to David's posterity, and of fixing the blessing to Jerusalem or Mount Zion, as the place that he chose to set his name there. And in this sense it was that the *very family* of Jacob were *God's people by covenant*, or his *covenant people*, and his *chosen people*; yea, and this even when they were no visible saints, when they were educated and lived in idolatry, and made no profession of the true religion.

On the whole, it is evident that the *very nation* of Israel, not as visible saints, but *as the progeny of Jacob according to the flesh*, were in some respect a *chosen people*, a *people of God*, a *covenant people*, a *holy nation*; even as Jerusalem was a *chosen city*, the *city of God*, a *holy city*, and a city that God had engaged *by covenant* to dwell in.

Thus a sovereign and all-wise God was pleased to ordain things with respect to *the nation* of Israel. Perhaps we may not be able to give all the reasons of such a constitution; but some of them seem to be pretty manifest; as,

1. The great and main end of separating one particular nation from all others, as God did *the nation* of Israel, was to prepare the way for the coming of the *Messiah*, who was to proceed of *that blood*. God's covenant with Abraham and the other patriarchs implied that the Messiah should be *of their blood*, or their seed *according to the flesh*. And therefore it was requisite that *their progeny according to the flesh* should be fenced in by a wall of separation, and made *God's people*. If the Messiah had been born of some of the *professors of Abraham's religion*, but of some other nation, that religion being propagated from nation to nation, as it is now under the gospel, it would not have answered

the covenant with Abraham, for the Messiah to have been born of Abraham's seed only in this sense. The *Messiah* being by covenant so related to Jacob's *progeny according to the flesh*, God was pleased, agreeably to the nature of such a covenant, to show great respect to that people on account of that external carnal relation. Therefore the apostle mentions it as one great privilege, that of them *according to the flesh* Christ came, Rom. ix. 5. As the introducing the *Messiah* and his salvation and kingdom was the special design of all God's dealings and peculiar dispensations towards that people, the natural result of this was, that great account should be made of their being *of that nation*, in God's covenant dealings with them.

2. That nation was a *typical nation*. There was then literally a *land*, that was the dwelling place of God; which was a type of heaven the true dwelling place of God, and an *external city of God*, which was a type of the spiritual city of God; *an external temple of God*, which was a type of his spiritual temple: so there was an external *people and family of God*, by carnal generation, which was a type of his spiritual progeny: and the covenant by which they were made a people of God, was a type of the covenant of grace; and so is sometimes represented as a marriage covenant. God, agreeable to the nature of that dispensation, showed a great regard to external and carnal things in those days, as types of spiritual things. What a great regard God did show then to external carnal qualifications for privileges and services, appears in this, that there is ten times so much said in the Books of Moses about such qualifications in the institutions of the passover and tabernacle services, as about any moral qualifications whatsoever. And so much were such typical qualifications insisted on, that even by the law of Moses the congregation of the Lord, or public congregation or church (for the word is the same) of visible worshippers of God, and the number of public professors of the true religion, who were visible saints, were not the same: for some were of the latter, that were not of the former; as particularly the eunuchs, who were excluded the congregation, though never so externally religious, yea truly pious; and so also bastards, &c.

3. It was the sovereign pleasure of God to choose *that family*, the posterity of *Jacob according to the flesh*, to reserve them for special favors to the end of time. And therefore they are still kept a distinct nation, being still reserved for distinguishing mercy in the latter day, when they shall be restored to the church of God. God is pleased in this way to testify his regard to their holy ancestors, and his regard to their external relation to Christ. Therefore the apostle still speaks of them as an *elect nation*, and *beloved for the fathers' sakes*, even after they were broken off from the good olive by unbelief. God's covenant with Abraham is in some sense in force with respect to that people, and reaches them even to this day; and yet surely they are not God's covenant people, in the sense that visible Christians are. See Lev. xxvi. 42.

If it be here said, It was often foretold by the prophets, that in the days of the gospel other *nations* should be the people of God, as well as the *nation* of the Jews: and when Christ sent forth his apostles, he bid them go and *disciple all nations*.

I answer: By a common figure of speech the prevailing part of a nation are called *the nation*, and what is done to them is said to be done to the nation, and what is done *by* them is said to be done *by* that nation: and it is to be hoped, that the time is coming when the prevailing part of many nations, yea of every nation under heaven, will be regularly brought into the visible church of Christ. And if we by *nations* in these prophecies understand any other than the prevailing part, and it be insisted on that we must understand it of all the people

belonging to those nations; there never has yet been any nation in this sense regularly brought into the visible church of Christ, even according to the scheme of those whom I oppose: for there never yet has been a whole nation that were outwardly moral. And besides, what Mr. Blake says in his *Treatise of the Covenant*, page 238, may be applied here, and serve as an answer to this objection: "The prophecies of the Old Testament (says he) of the glory of the New Testament times, are in Old Testament phrases, by way of allusion to the worship of those times, set forth to us." In Rev. xxi. 24, *nations* are spoken of, as having an interest in the *New Jerusalem*, which yet is represented as perfectly pure, without the least degree of pollution and defilement, ver. 27. And as for the command to the apostles, to *disciple all nations*, it was a direction to them as to what they should attempt, or do as much towards as they could; not a prediction of what they should bring to pass in their day: for they never brought one half of any one nation into the visible Christian church, nor any at all in one half of the nations in the world, it is very probable.

If it should here be further objected, that it is an evidence that Gentile Christians are visible saints, according to the New Testament notion of visible saintship, in the very same manner as the whole Jewish nation were till they were broken off by their obstinate rejection of the Messiah; that the Gentile Christians are represented as being *grafted into the same olive*, from whence the Jews were *broken off by unbelief*, Rom. xi. 17, &c.

I would inquire, What any one can intend by this objection? Whether it be this, viz., that we ought to insist on no higher or better qualifications, in admitting persons as members of the Christian church, and to all its privileges, than the whole nation of the Jews, of that generation which lived in Christ's time were possessed of, till they had obstinately persisted in their rejection of him? If this is *not intended*, the objection is nothing to the purpose: or if this *be* intended, neither then is it to the purpose of those with whom I have especially to do in this controversy, who hold *orthodoxy*, *knowledge* of the fundamental doctrines of religion, *moral sincerity*, and a *good conversation*, to be qualifications, which ought to be insisted on in order to a visible church state: for a very great part of those Jews were destitute of these qualifications; many of them were Sadducees, who denied a future state; others of them Herodians, who were occasional conformists with the Romans in their idolatries; the prevailing sect among them were Pharisees, who openly professed the false doctrine of justification by the works of the law and external privileges, that *leaven of the Pharisees*, which Christ warns his diciples to beware of: many of them were scandalously *ignorant*, for their teachers had taken away the key of knowledge: multitudes were grossly *vicious*, for it was a generation in which all manner of sin and wickedness prevailed.

I think that text in Rom. xi. can be understood no otherwise, in any consistence with plain fact, than that the Gentile Christians succeeded the Jews, who had been either in themselves or ancestors, the children of Abraham, with respect to a visible interest in the covenant of grace (which, as has been observed, was the substance and marrow of the covenant made with Abraham), until they were broken off from the church, and ceased any longer to be visible saints by their open and obstinate unbelief; as indeed either they or their ancestors had all been thus broken off from the church of visible saints; for every branch or family of the stock of Jacob had been in the church of visible saints, and each branch withered and failed through unbelief. This was the highest and most important sense in which any of the Jews were externally the children of Abraham, and implied the greatest privileges. But there was another

sense, in which the whole nation, including even those of them who were no visible saints, were his children (which as has been shown), implied great privileges, wherein Christian Gentiles do not succeed them, though they have additional ecclesiastical privileges, vastly beyond the Jews.

Whether I have succeeded, in rightly explaining these matters, or no, yet my failing in it is of no great importance with regard to the strength of the objection, that occasioned my attempting it; which was, that scandalously *wicked* men among the Jews are called *God's people*, &c. The objection, as I observed, is as much against the scheme of those whom I oppose, as against my scheme; and therefore it as much concerns *them*, to find out some explanation of the matter that shall show something else is intended by it, than their having the qualifications of visible saints, as it does me; and a failing in such an attempt as much affects and hurts their cause, as it does mine.

Objection III.

Those in Israel, who made no profession of piety of heart, did according to divine institution partake of the passover; a Jewish *sacrament*, representing the same things, and a seal of the very same covenant of grace with the *Lord's supper;* and particularly it would be unreasonable to suppose, that all made a profession of godliness whom God commanded to keep that first *passover* in Egypt, which the whole congregation were required to keep, and there is no shadow of any such thing as their all first making a solemn public profession of those things wherein true piety consists: and so the people in general partook of the *passover*, from generation to generation; but it would be hard to suppose, that they all professed a supreme regard to God in their hearts.

Answer 1. The affair of the Israelites' participation of the *passover*, and particularly that first *passover* in Egypt, is attended with altogether as much difficulty in regard to the qualifications which the *objectors* themselves suppose requisite in communicants at the Lord's table, as with regard to those which I insist upon; and if there be any argument in the case, it is fully as strong an argument against *their* scheme, as mine. *One* thing they insist upon as a requisite qualification for the Lord's supper, is a public profession of religion as to the essential doctrines of it: but there is no more shadow of a public profession of this kind, preceding that passover in Egypt, than of a profession of godliness. Here, not to insist on the great doctrines of the *fall of man*, of our *undone state by nature*, of the *Trinity*, of our *dependence on the free grace of God for justification*, &c., let us take only those two doctrines of a *future state of rewards and punishments*, and the doctrine of *the Messiah to come*, that Messiah who was represented in the *passover:* is there any more appearance, in sacred story, of the people's making a public profession in Egypt of these doctrines before they partook of the passover, than of their making profession of the love of God? And is there any more probability of the former, than of the latter? *Another* thing which they on the other side suppose necessary to a due attendance on the Lord's supper, is, that when any have openly been guilty of gross sins they should, before they come to this sacrament, openly *confess* and *humble* themselves for their faults. Now it is evident by many Scriptures, that a great part of the children of Israel in Egypt had been guilty of joining with the Egyptians in worshipping their false gods, and had lived in idolatry: but the history in Exodus gives us no account of any public solemn confession of, or humiliation for this great sin, before they came to the passover. Mr. Stoddard observes (*Appeal* p. 58, 59) that there was in the church of Israel a way appointed by God for the removal of scandals; men being re-

quired in that case to offer up their *sacrifices*, attended with *confession* and visible signs of *repentance*. But where do we read of the people's offering up sacrifices in Egypt, attended with confession for removing the scandal of that most heinous sin of *idolatry* they had lived in? Or is there any more probability of their publicly professing their repentance and humiliation for their sin, before their celebrating the passover, than of their publicly professing to love God above all? *Another* thing which they suppose to be requisite in order to admission to the Lord's table, and about which they would have a particular care be taken, is, that every person admitted give evidence of a competent *knowledge* in the doctrines of religion, and none be allowed to partake who are grossly ignorant. Now there is no more appearance of this with regard to the congregation in Egypt, than of a *profession of godliness;* and it is as difficult to suppose it. There is abundant reason to suppose, that vast numbers in that nation, consisting of more than a million of adult persons, had been brought up in a great degree of ignorance, amidst their slavery in Egypt, where the people seem to have almost forgotten the true God and the true religion: and though pains had been taken by Moses, now for a short season, to instruct the people better; yet it must be considered, it is a very great work, to take a whole nation under such degrees of ignorance and prejudice, and bring every one of them to a competent degree of knowledge in religion; and a greater work still for Moses both thus to instruct them, and also by examination or otherwise, to come to a just satisfaction, that all had indeed attained to such knowledge.

Mr. Stoddard insists, that if grace be requisite in the Lord's supper, it would have been as much so in the *passover*, inasmuch as the chief thing the *passover* (as well as the Lord's supper) has respect to and represents, is Christ's sufferings. But if on this account the same qualifications are requisite in both ordinances, then it would be as requisite that the partakers should have knowledge to *discern the Lord's body* (in Mr. Stoddard's sense of 1 Cor. xi. 29) in the *passover*, as in the Lord's supper. But this certainly is as difficult to suppose, as that they professed godliness: for how does it appear, that the people in general who partook of the *passover*, knew that it signified the death of the *Messiah*, and the way in which he should make atonement for sin by his blood? Does it look very likely that they should know this, when Christ's own disciples had not knowledge thus to *discern the Lord's body* in the *passover*, of which they partook from year to year with their Master? Can it be supposed, they actually knew Christ's death, and the design of it to be thereby signified, when they did not so much as realize the fact itself, that Christ was to die, at least not till the year before the last passover? And besides, how unreasonable would it be to suppose, that the Jews understood what was signified, pertaining to Christ and salvation by him, in all those many kinds of sacrifices, which they attended and partook of, and all the vast variety of ceremonies belonging to them; all which sacrifices were sacramental representations of Christ's death, as well as the sacrifice of the passover? The apostle tells us that all these things had *a shadow of good things to come*, the things concerning *Christ;* and yet there are many of them, which the church of Christ to this day does not understand; though we are under a thousand times greater advantage to understand them than they were; having the *New Testament*, wherein God uses *great plainness of speech*, to guide us, and living in days wherein the *vail* which Moses put over his face is taken away in Christ, and the vail of the temple rent, and have the substance and antitype plainly exhibited, and so have opportunity to compare these with those shadows.

If it be objected, as a difficulty that lies against our supposing a profession of godliness requisite to a participation of the *passover*, that they who were uncircumcised, were expressly forbidden to partake, and if conversion was as important, and a more important qualification than circumcision, why were not the *unregenerate* as expressly forbidden? I answer; Why were not *scandalous* sinners as expressly forbidden? And why was not *moral sincerity* as expressly required as circumcision?

If it be objected that they were *all* expressly and strictly required to keep the passover; but if grace was requisite, and God knew that many of the partakers would have no grace, why would he give such universal orders?

I answer: When God gave those commands, he knew that the commands, in all their strictness, would reach many persons who in the time of the *passover* would be without so much as *moral sincerity* in religion. Every man in the nation, of every generation, and which should be in being each year, from the first institution till the death of Christ, were all (excepting such as were ceremonially unclean, or in a journey) strictly required to keep the feast of the *passover;* and yet God knew that multitudes would be without the qualification of *moral seriousness* in religion. It would be very unreasonable to suppose, that every single person in the nation was morally serious, even in the very best time that ever passed over the nation; or that ever there was such a happy day with that nation, or any other nation under heaven, wherein all were morally sincere in religion. How much then was it otherwise many times with that nation, which was so prone to corruption, and so often generally involved in gross wickedness? But the strict command of God to keep the *passover* reached the morally *insincere*, as well as others; they are nowhere excepted, any more than the *unconverted*. And as to any general commands of God's word, these no more required men to turn from a state of moral insincerity before they came to the *passover*, than they required them to turn from a graceless state.

But further, I reply, that God required them all to keep the *passover*, no more strictly than he required them all to *love* the Lord their God with their whole heart: and if God might strictly command this, he might also strictly command them, to keep that ordinance wherein they were especially to profess it, and seal their profession of it. That *evil generation* were not expressly forbidden to keep the *passover* in succeeding years, for the whole *forty years* during which they went on provoking God, very often by gross sinning and open rebelling; but still the express and strict commands for the whole congregation to keep the *passover* reached them, nor were they released from their obligation.

If it be said, that we must suppose multitudes in Israel attended the *passover*, from age to age, without such a *visibility* of *piety* as I have insisted on; and yet we do not find their attending this ordinance charged on them as a *sin*, in Scripture; I answer: We must also suppose that multitudes in Israel, from age to age, attended the passover, who lived in *moral insincerity*, yea, and *scandalous wickedness*. For the people in general very often notoriously corrupted themselves, and declined to ways of open and great transgression; and yet there is reason to think, that in these times of corruption, for the most part, they upheld *circumcision* and the *passover;* and we do not find their attending on these ordinances under such circumstances, any more expressly charged on them as a sin, than their coming without piety of heart. The *ten tribes* continued constantly in *idolatry* for about two hundred and fifty years, and there is ground to suppose, that in the mean time they ordinarily kept up circumcision and the passover: for though they worshipped God by images, yet they main

tained most of the ceremonial observances of the law of Moses, called *the manner of the God of the land*, which their priests taught the Samaritans, who were settled in their stead, 2 Kings, xvii. 26, 27. Nevertheless we do not find Elijah, Elisha, or other prophets that were sent among them, reproving them for attending these ordinances without the required moral qualifications. Indeed there are some things in the writings of the prophets, which may be interpreted as a reproof of this; but no more as a reproof of this, than of attending God's ordinances, without a gracious sincerity and true piety of heart and life.

How many seasons were there, wherein the people in general fell into and lived in *idolatry*, that scandal of scandals, in the times of the judges, and in the times of the kings both in Judah and Israel? But still amidst all this wickedness, they continued to attend the sacrament of *circumcision;* we have every whit as much evidence of it, as that they attended the *passover* without a profession of godliness: we have no account of their ever leaving it off at such seasons, nor any hint of its being renewed (as a thing which had ceased) when they came to reform. Though we have so full an account of the particulars of Josiah's reformation, after that long scandalous reign of Manasseh, there is no hint of any reviving of *circumcision*, or returning to it after a cessation. And where have we an account of the people's being once reproved for attending this holy sacrament while thus involved in *scandalous sin*, in all the Old Testament? And where is this once charged on them as a sin, any more than in the case of unconverted persons attending the sacrament of the *passover?**

Ans. II. Whatever was the case with respect to the qualifications for the sacraments of the Old Testament dispensation, I humbly conceive it is nothing to the purpose in the present argument, nor needful to determine us with respect to the qualifications for the sacraments of the *Christian* dispensation, which is a matter of such plain fact in the New Testament. Far am I from thinking the Old Testament to be like an old almanack out of use; nay, I think it is evident from the New Testament that some things which had their first institution under the Old Testament, are continued under the New; for instance, particularly, the acceptance of the infant seed of believers as children of the covenant with their parents; and probably some things belonging to the order and discipline of Christian churches, had their first beginning in the Jewish synagogue. But yet, all allow that the Old Testament *dispensation* is out of date, with its ordinances: and I think in a matter pertaining to the constitution and order of the *New Testament church*, that is a matter of fact wherein the *New Testament* itself is express, full and abundant, in such a case to have recourse to the Mosaic dispensation for rules or precedents to determine our judgment, is quite needless and out of reason. There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines do so much differ, as the stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and of Christ. And probably the reason why God has left it so intricate, is, because our understanding the ancient dispensation, and God's design in it, is not of so great importance, nor does so nearly concern us. Since God uses great plainness of speech in the New Testament, which is as it were the charter and municipal law of the Christian church, what need we run back to the ceremonial and typical institutions of an antiquated dispensation, wherein God's declared design was, to deliver divine things in comparative obscurity, hid under a vail, and involved in clouds?

* Let the reader here take notice of what is observed in the conclusion of my answer to the objection from the instance of Judas.

We have no more occasion for going to search among the types, dark revelations, and carnal ordinances of the Old Testament, to find out whether this matter of fact concerning the constitution and order of the New Testament church be true, than we have occasion for going there to find out whether any other matter of fact, we have an account of in the New Testament be true; as particularly whether there were such officers in the primitive church as *bishops* and *deacons*, whether *miraculous* gifts of the Spirit were common in the apostles' days, whether the believing Gentiles were received into the primitive Christian church, and the like.

ANS. III. I think, nothing can be alleged from the Holy Scripture, that is sufficient to prove a *profession of godliness* to be not a qualification requisite in order to a due and regular participation of the *passover*.

Although none of the requisite moral qualifications for this Jewish sacrament, either of one kind or other, are near so clearly made known in the Old Testament, as the qualifications for the *Christian* sacraments are in the New; and although the supposing a visibility, either of moral sincerity, or sanctifying grace, to be requisite, is (both respecting the one case and the other) involved in some obscurity and difficulty; yet I would humbly offer what appears to me to be the truth concerning that matter, in the things that follow.

(1.) Although the people in Egypt, before the *first passover*, probably made no *explicit* public profession at all, either of their *humiliation for their former idolatry*, or of *present devotedness of heart to God*; it being before any particular institution of an express public profession, either of godliness, or repentance in case of scandal; yet I think there was some sort of *public manifestation*, or *implicit profession* of both. Probably in Egypt they implicitly professed the same things, which they afterwards professed more expressly and solemnly in the *wilderness*. The Israelites in Egypt had very much to affect their hearts, before the last plague, in the great things that God had done for them; especially in some of the latter plagues, wherein they were so remarkably distinguished from the Egyptians. They seem now to be brought to a tender frame, and a disposition to show much respect to God (see Exod. xii. 27), and were probably now very forward to profess themselves devoted to him, and true penitents.

(2.) After the institution of an *explicit public profession* of devotedness to God, or (which is the same thing) of true piety of heart, this was wont to be required in order to a partaking of the *passover* and other sacrifices and sacraments that adult persons were admitted to. Accordingly all the adult persons that were circumcised at Gilgal, had made this profession a little before on the plains of Moab; as has been already observed. Not that all of them were truly gracious; but seeing they all had a profession and visibility, Christ in his dealings with his church as to external things, acted not as the Searcher of hearts, but as the Head of the visible church, accommodating himself to the present state of mankind; and therefore he represents himself in Scripture as *trusting* his people's profession; as I formerly observed.

(3.) In *degenerate times* in Israel, both priests and people were very *lax* with respect to covenanting with God, and professing devotedness to him; and these professions were used, as public professions commonly are still in corrupt times, merely as matters of *form* and *ceremony*, at least by great multitudes.

(4.) Such was the nature of the Levitical dispensation, that it had in no measure so great tendency to preclude and prevent *hypocritical professions*, as the *New Testament dispensation*; particularly on account of the vastly greater *darkness* of it. For the covenant of grace was not then so fully revealed, and

consequently the nature of the conditions of that covenant not then so well known. There was then a far more obscure revelation of those great duties of repentance towards God and faith in the Mediator, and of those things wherein true holiness consists, and wherein it is distinguished from other things. Persons then had not equal advantage to know their own hearts, while viewing themselves in this comparatively dim light of Moses's law, as now they have in the clear sunshine of the gospel. In that state of the minority of the church, the nature of true piety, as consisting in the *spirit of adoption*, or ingenuous filial love to God, and as distinguished from a *spirit of bondage*, servile fear and self-love, was not so clearly made known. The Israelites were therefore the more ready to mistake, for true piety, that moral seriousness and those warm affections and resolutions that resulted from that *spirit of bondage*, which showed itself in Israel remarkably at Mount Sinai: and which, throughout all the Old Testament times, they were especially incident to.

(5.) God was pleased in a great measure *to wink at* and *suffer* (though he did not properly allow) that *laxness* there was among the people, with regard to the visibility of holiness, and the moral qualifications requisite to an attendance on their sacraments; as also he did in many other cases of great irregularity, under that dark, imperfect, and comparatively carnal dispensation; such as polygamy, putting away their wives at pleasure, the revenger of blood killing the manslayer, &c., and as he winked at the worshipping in high places in Solomon's time (1 Kings iii. 4, 5); at the neglect of keeping the feast of tabernacles according to the law, from Joshua's time until after the captivity (Neh. viii. 17); and as he winked at the neglect of the synagogue worship, or the public service of God in particular congregations, until after the captivity,* though the light of nature, together with the general rules of the law of Moses, did sufficiently teach and require it.

(6.) It seems to be from time to time foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, that there would be a great alteration in this respect, in the days of the gospel; that under the new dispensation there should be far *greater purity* in the church. Thus in the forementioned place in Ezekiel it is foretold, that "those who are [*visibly*] uncircumcised in heart, should NO MORE enter into God's sanctuary." Again Ezek. xx. 37, 38, "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me." It seems to be a prophecy of the greater purity of those who are visibly *in covenant with God*. Isa. iv. 3, "And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living [i. e., *has a name to live*, or is enrolled among the saints] in Jerusalem." Isa. lii. 1, "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; from henceforth there shall NO MORE come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Zech. xiv. 21, "And in that day, there shall be NO MORE the Canaanite in the house of the Lord."

(7.) This is just such an alteration as might reasonably be expected from what we are taught of the whole *nature* of the *two dispensations*. As the one had *carnal ordinances* (so they are called Heb. ix. 10) the other a *spiritual* service; (John iv. 24) the one an *earthly* Canaan, the other a *heavenly;* the one an *external* Jerusalem, the other a *spiritual;* the one an *earthly* high priest, the other a *heavenly;* the one a *worldly* sanctuary, the other a *spiritual;* the

* *Prid. Connect.* Part I. p. 354, 536, and 555, 556, 9th Edit. The word translated *synagogues*, Psal lxxiv. 8, signifies *assemblies;* and is supposed by the generality of learned men to relate to another sort of assemblies.

one a bodily and *temporal* redemption (which is all that they generally discerned or understood in the passover), the other a *spiritual* and *eternal*. And agreeably to these things, it was so ordered in Providence, that Israel, the congregation that should enter this *worldly* sanctuary, and attend these *carnal* ordinances, should be much more a *worldly*, *carnal* congregation, than the New Testament congregation. One reason why it was ordered in providence that there should be such a difference, seems to be this, viz., that the Messiah might have the honor of introducing a state of greater purity and spiritual glory. Hence God is said to find *fault* with that ancient dispensation of the covenant, Heb. viii. 7, 8. And the time of introducing the new dispensation is called the time of *reformation*, Heb. ix. 10. And one thing, wherein the amendment of what God found fault with in the former dispensation should consist, the apostle intimates, is the greater *purity* and *spirituality* of the church, Heb. viii. 7, 8, 11.

Objection IV.

It is not reasonable to suppose that the multitudes which John the Baptist baptized made a *profession* of saving grace, or had any such *visibility* of true piety as has been insisted on.

ANSWER. Those whom John baptized, *came to him confessing their sins*, making a profession of some kind of *repentance;* and it is not reasonable to suppose, the repentance they professed was specifically or in kind *diverse* from that which he had instructed them in, and called them to, which is called *repentance for the remission of sins;* and that is saving repentance. John's baptism is called *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins:* I know not how such a phrase can be reasonably understood any otherwise, than so as to imply, that his *baptism* was some exhibition of that repentance, and a seal of the profession of it. Baptism is a seal of some sort of religious profession, in adult persons: but the very name of John's baptism shows, that it was a seal of a profession of *repentance for the remission of sins.* It is said, Luke iii. 3, "John PREACHED the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." What can be understood by this, but his *preaching* that men should now speedily *turn to God*, by true *repentance and faith* in the promised Saviour, and *come and confess their sins*, and openly declare this repentance towards God, and faith in the Lamb of God, and that they should confirm and seal this their profession by *baptism*, as well as therein receive the seal of God's willingness to remit the sins of such as had this faith and repentance. Accordingly we are told, the *people came and were baptized of him, confessing their sins*, manifesting and professing that sort of repentance and faith which he preached. They had no notion of any *other sort* of repentance put into their heads, that they could suppose John *called* them to profess in *baptism*, but this accompanied with *faith* in the Lamb whom he called them to behold; for he *preached* no other to them. The people that John baptized, professed both *repentance for the remission of sins*, and also *faith in the Messiah;* as is evident by Acts xix. 4, 5, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him that should come after him;" i. e., on *Christ Jesus:* "When they heard this [John's preaching] they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

If it be objected here, that we are told, Matt. iii. 5, 6, "There went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins;" and that it is not to be imagined *all* these made any credible profession of saving repentance and faith; I

answer: No more is to be understood by these expressions, according to the phraseology of the Scripture, than that there was a very great resort of people from these places to John. Nor is there any more to be understood by the like term of universality in John iii. 26, "They came to John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and ALL MEN come to him;" that is, there was a great resort to him from all quarters. It is in no wise unreasonable to suppose, there was indeed a very great number of people that came to John from the places mentioned, who being exceedingly moved by his preaching, in that time of extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit, made profession of the faith and repentance which John preached. Doubtless there were many more professors than real converts: but still, in the great resort to John there were many of the latter character; as we may infer from the prophecy; as appears by Luke i. 16, 17: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." And from that account of fact in Matt. xi. 12, "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." And in Luke xvi. 16, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and EVERY MAN presseth into it." Here the expression is no less universal, than that which is objected in Matt. iii. 5, 6. As to those wicked Pharisees, that so much opposed Christ, some of them I suppose had been baptized by John, and then had a great show of repentance and faith; but they afterwards apostatized and were much worse than ever before: therefore Christ speaks of them as being like a *house* from *which the unclean spirit* is visibly turned out for *a while*, and is *left empty, swept, and garnished*, but afterwards is *repossessed*, and has many devils instead of one, Luke xi. 24, &c. Yet as to the greater part of these Pharisees, they were not baptized by John; as appears by Luke vii. 29, 30.

If it be further objected, that John in baptizing such multitudes could not have *time* to be sufficiently informed of those he baptized, whether their profession of godliness was *credible* or no: I answer: That we are not particularly informed of the circumstances of his teaching, and of the assistance he was favored with, and the means he had of information concerning those whom he baptized: but we may be sure of one thing, viz., he had as much opportunity to inquire into the credibility of their profession, as he had to inquire into their *doctrinal* knowledge and *moral* character; which my opponents suppose to be necessary, as well as I: and this is enough to silence the present objection.

Objection V.

Christ says, Matt. xx. 16, and again, chap. xxii. 14, that *many are called, but few are chosen.* By which it is evident, that there are *many* who belong to the *visible church*, and yet but *few* real and true *saints;* and that it is ordinarily thus, even under the *New Testament*, and in days of gospel light: and therefore that *visibility* of *saintship*, whereby persons are visible saints in a Scripture sense, cannot imply an apparent probability of their being *real* saints, or truly gracious persons.

ANSWER. In these texts, by those that are *called*, are not meant those who are visible saints, and have the requisite qualifications for Christian sacraments; but all such as have the *external call* of the word of God, and have its offers

and invitations made to them. And it is undoubtedly true, and has been matter of fact, for the most part, that of those *called* in this sense, *many* have been but *only* called, and never truly obedient to the call, *few* have been true saints So it was in the Jewish nation, which the parable in the twentieth of Matthew has a special respect to; they in general had the *external call* of God's word, and in general attended many religious duties, in hopes of God's favor and reward, which is called *laboring in God's vineyard;* and yet but *few* of them eventually obtained salvation; nay, great multitudes of those who are *called* in this sense, were *scandalous* persons, and gross hypocrites. The Pharisees and Sadducees were *called*, and they *labored in the vineyard*, in the sense of the parable; for which they expected great rewards above the Gentile converts or proselytes; wherefore their *eye was evil* towards them, and they could not bear that they should be made *equal* to them: but still these Pharisees and Sadducees had not generally the intellectual and moral qualifications, that my opponents suppose requisite for *Christian* sacraments; being generally scandalous persons, denying some fundamental principles of religion, and explaining away some of its most important precepts. Thus *many* in Christendom are called by the outward call of God's word, and yet *few* of them are in a state of salvation: but not all these that sit under the sound of the gospel, and hear its invitations, are fit to come to sacraments.

That by those who are *called*, in this saying of our Saviour, is meant those that have the *gospel offer*, and not those who belong to the society of *visible saints*, is evident beyond all dispute, in Matt. xxii. 14. By the *many that are called*, are plainly intended the many that are *invited to the wedding*.—In the foregoing parable, we have an account of those that from time to time were *bidden* or CALLED (for the word is the same in the original): verse 3, "And sent forth his servants to CALL them that were CALLED [καλεσαι τους κεκλημενους], and they would not come." This has respect to the Jews, who refused not only savingly to come to Christ, but refused so much as to come into the visible church of Christ. Verse 4, "Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden [or CALLED], Behold, I have prepared my dinner," &c. Verse 8, "They which were bidden [or CALLED] were not worthy." Verse 9, "Go ye therefore to the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid [or CALL καλεσατε] to the marriage," or nuptial banquet; representing the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles; who upon it came into the *king's house*, i. e., the visible church, and among them *one that had not on a wedding garment, who was bound hand and foot and cast out when the king came:* and then at the conclusion, Christ adds this remark, verse 14, "For many are CALLED or bidden (κλητοι) but few are chosen;" which must have reference, not only to the *man* last mentioned, who came into the wedding house, the Christian visible church, *without* a *wedding garment*, but to those also mentioned before, who were *called*, but would not so much as *come into the king's house*, or join the visible Christian church. To suppose this saying to have reference only to that *one man* who came without a *wedding garment* (representing one that comes into the visible church, but is not a true saint), would be to make the introduction of this aphorism, and its connection with what went before, very strange and unintelligible, because then it would be as much as to say thus, "*Multitudes* came into the king's house, who were *called*, and the house was full of guests; but among them was found *one* man who was not *chosen; for many are* called, *but few are* chosen."

Objection VI.

When the servants of the householder, in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt. xiii.), unexpectedly found *tares* among the wheat, they said to their master, "Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them; let both grow together until the harvest." Which shows the mind of Christ, that we ought not to go about to make a *distinction* between true saints and apparent in this world, or aim at any such thing as admitting true saints *only* into the visible church, but ought to let *both* be *together* in the church till the day of *judgment.*

ANSW. I. These things in this parable have no manner of reference to *introduction*, into the field, or *admission* into the visible church, as though no care nor measures should be taken to prevent *tares* being *sown;* or as though the servants who had the charge of the field, would have done well to have taken *tares*, appearing to be such, and *planted* them in the field amongst the wheat: no, instead of this, the parable plainly implies the contrary. But the words cited have wholly respect to a CASTING OUT and purging the field, *after* the tares had been introduced *unawares*, and *contrary to design*, through men's infirmity and Satan's procurement. Concerning purging *tares* out of the field, or casting men out of the church, there is no difference between me and those whom I oppose in the present controversy: and therefore it is impossible there should be any objection from that which Christ says here concerning this matter, against *me*, but what is as much of an objection against *them;* for we both hold the same thing. It is agreed on all hands, that adult persons, actually admitted to communion of the visible church, however they may behave themselves so as to bring their spiritual state into suspicion, yet ought not to be *cast out*, unless they are obstinate in *heresy* or *scandal;* lest, while we go about to root out the *tares*, we should root out the *wheat* also. And it is also agreed on all hands, that when those represented under the name of *tares* bring forth such evil fruit, such scandalous and obstinate wickedness, as is plainly and visibly inconsistent with the being of true grace, they ought to be *cast out.* And therefore it is impossible that this objection should be any thing to the purpose.

ANSW. II. I think this parable, instead of being a just objection *against* the doctrine I maintain, is on the contrary a clear evidence *for it.*

For (1,) the parable shows plainly, that if any are introduced into the field of the householder, or church of Christ, who prove not to be *wheat* (i. e., not true saints) they are brought in *unawares*, or contrary to design; and that they are what do not properly belong there. If *tares* are as properly to be *sown* in the field, as is the *wheat*, which must be the case if the Lord's supper be a *converting* ordinance; then surely no care ought to be taken to introduce *wheat* only, and no respect ought to be had more to the qualities of *wheat* in sowing the field, than the qualities of *tares;* nor is there any more impropriety in the *tares* having a place there, than the *wheat:* but this surely is altogether inconsistent with the scope of the parable.

(2.) This parable plainly shows, that those who are in the visible church, have all of them at first a *visibility*, or appearance to human sight, of *true grace*, or of the nature of true saints. For it is observed, *tares* have this property, that when they first appear, and till the products of the field arrive to some maturity, they have such a resemblance of *wheat*, that it is next to impossible to *distinguish* them.

Objection VII.

Christ himself administered the Lord's supper to Judas, whom he knew at the same time to be *graceless;* which is a full evidence, that grace is not *in itself* a requisite qualification in order to coming to the Lord's supper; and if it be not requisite in itself, a *profession* of it cannot be requisite.

Answ. I. It is to me apparent, that Judas was not present at the administration of the Lord's supper. It is true, he was present at the passover, and *dipped with Christ in the* paschal *dish.* The three former Evangelists do differ in the order of the account they give of this *dipping in the dish.* Luke gives an account of it *after* his account of the Lord's supper, Luke xxii. 21. But Matthew and Mark both give an account of it *before.* (Matt. xxvi. 23, Mark xiv. 20.) And the like might be shown in abundance of instances of these three Evangelists differing one from another in the *order* of their narratives; one places those things in his history after others, which another places first; these sacred historians not undertaking to declare precisely the *date* of every incident, but regarding more the truth of facts, than the order of time. However, in the present case, the nature of the thing speaks for itself, and shows that *Judas's dipping with Christ in the dish,* or *his hand being with Christ on the table,* or *receiving a sop dipped in the dish,* must be in that order wherein Matthew and Mark place it in their history, viz., at the *passover,* antecedent to the Lord's supper: for there is no such thing in the Lord's supper as *dipping of sops* and *dipping together in the dish;* but there was such a thing in the passover, where all had their hands together in the dish, and dipped their sops in the bitter sauce. None of these three Evangelists give us any account of the time when Judas went out; but John, who is vastly more particular as to what passed that night, and is everywhere more exact as to the order of time than the other Evangelists, gives us an account, and is very precise as to the time, viz., that *Jesus when he gave him the sop,* at the same time sent him away, bidding him *do quickly what he intended to do;* and accordingly *when he had received the sop he went immediately out,* John xiii. 27—30. Now this sop being at the *passover,* it is evident he was not present at the *Lord's supper* which followed. Many of the best expositors are of this opinion, such as Van Mastricht, Dr. Doddridge, and others.

Answ. II. If Judas was there, I deny the consequence.—As I have observed once and again concerning the Lord's dealings with his people under the Old Testament, so under the New the same observation takes place: Christ did not come to *judge the secrets of men,* nor did ordinarily act in his external dealings with his disciples, and in administration of ordinances, as the *Searcher of hearts;* but rather as the Head of the visible church, proceeding according to what was exhibited in profession and visibility; herein setting an example to his ministers, who should stand in his place when he was gone, and act in his name in the administration of ordinances. Judas had made the same profession of regard to his master, and of forsaking all for him, as the other disciples: and therefore Christ did not openly renounce him till he himself had destroyed his profession and visibility of saintship, by public scandalous apostasy. Supposing then the presence of Judas at the Lord's supper, this affords no consequence in favor of what I oppose.

Answ. III If they with whom I have to do in this controversy, are not contented with the answers already given, and think there is a remaining difficulty in this matter lying against *my scheme,* I will venture to tell them, that

the difficulty lies full as hard against *their own scheme;* and if there be any strength at all in the argument, it is to all intents of the same strength against the need of those *qualifications* which they themselves suppose to be necessary in order to an approach to the Lord's table, as against those which I think so. For although they do not think renewing saving grace necessary, yet they suppose *moral seriousness* or (as they variously speak) *moral sincerity* in religion to be necessary: they suppose it to be requisite, that persons should have some kind of serious principle and view in coming to the Lord's table; some sort of intention of subjecting themselves to Christ, and of seeking and serving him, in general; and in particular some religious end in coming to the sacramental supper, some religious respect to Christ in it. But now did not Christ at that time perfectly know, that Judas had none of these things? He knew he had nothing of sincerity in the Christian religion, or of regard to *Christ* in that ordinance, of any sort whatsoever; he knew that Satan had entered into him and filled his heart, and that he was then cherishing in himself a malignant, malicious spirit against his master, excited by the reproof Christ had lately given him (compare John xii. 8, with Matt. xxvi. 8—16, and Mark xiv. 4—11), and that he had already formed a traitorous, murderous design against him, and was now in the prosecution of that bloody design, having actually just before been to the chief priests, and agreed with them to *betray* him for thirty pieces of silver. (See Matt. xxvi. 14, 15, 16, Mark xiv. 10, 11, Luke xxii. 3—6, and John xiii. 2.) Christ knew these things, and knew that Judas was utterly unqualified for the *holy* sacrament of the Lord's supper; though it had not yet been made known to the church, or the disciples.—Therefore it concerns those on the contrary part in this controversy, to find out some solution of this difficulty, as much as it does me; and they will find they have as much need to take refuge in the solution already given, in one or other of the two preceding answers to this objection.

By the way I would observe, that Christ's not excluding Judas from the passover under these circumstances, *knowing* him to be thus *unqualified*, without so much as *moral sincerity*, &c., is another thing that effectually enervates all the strength of the objection against me, from the *passover:* for Judas did not only in common with others fall under God's strict command in the law of Moses, to keep this feast, without any exception of his case there to be found; but *Christ* himself, with his own hand, gave him the *sop*, a part of the paschal feast; even although at the same instant he had in view the man's secret wickedness and hypocrisy, the traitorous design which was then in his heart, and the horrid conspiracy with the chief priests, which he had already entered into, and was now in prosecution of: this was then in Christ's mind, and he intimated it to him, at the same moment when he gave him the sop, saying, *What thou dost, do quickly.* This demonstrates that the objection from the *passover* is no stronger argument against my scheme, than the scheme of those whom I oppose; because it is no stronger against the necessity of *sanctifying grace*, the qualification for Christian sacraments, which I insist upon, than it is against the necessity of *moral seriousness* or *sincerity*, the qualifications which they insist upon.

Objection VIII.

If *sanctifying grace* be a requisite qualification in order to persons' due access to Christian sacraments, God would have given some *certain rule* whereby those who are to admit them, might know whether they have such grace or not.

ANSWER. This objection was obviated in my stating the question. However, I will say something further to it in this place; and would here observe, that if there be any strength in this objection, it lies in the truth of this proposition., viz., *That whatever qualifications are requisite in order to persons' due access to Christian sacraments, God has given some* certain rule, *whereby those who admit them, may know whether they have those qualifications, or not.* If this proposition is not true, then there is no force at all in the argument. But I dare say, there is not a divine, nor Christian of common sense, on the face of the earth, that will assert and stand to it, that this proposition is true: for there is none will deny, that some sort of belief of the being of a God, some sort of belief that the Scriptures are the word of God, that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, and that Jesus is the Messiah, are qualifications requisite in order to persons' due access to Christian sacraments; and yet God has given those who are to admit persons no *certain rule* whereby they may know whether they believe any one of these things. Neither has he given his ministers or churches any *certain rule*, whereby they may know whether any person that offers himself for admission to the sacrament, has any degree of moral sincerity, moral seriousness of spirit, or any inward moral qualification whatsoever. These things have all their existence in the soul, which is out of our neighbor's view. Not therefore a *certainty*, but a *profession* and *visibility* of these things, must be the rule of the church's proceedings; and it is as good and as reasonable a rule of judgment concerning *saving grace*, as it is concerning any other internal, invisible qualifications, which cannot certainly be known by any but the subject himself.

Objection IX.

If *sanctifying grace* be requisite to a due approach to the Lord's table, then no man may come but he that *knows* he has such grace. A man must not only *think* he has a right to the Lord's supper, in order to his lawful partaking of it; but he must *know* he has a right. If nothing but *sanctification* gives him a *real right* to the Lord's supper, then nothing short of the knowledge of sanctification gives him a *known right* to it: only an *opinion* and *probable hopes* of a right will not warrant his coming.

ANSW. I. I desire those who insist on this as an invincible argument, to consider calmly whether they themselves ever did or ever will stand to it. For here these two things are to be observed:

(1.) If no man may warrantably come to the Lord's supper, but such as know they have a right, then no *unconverted* persons may come unless they not only think, but know it is the *mind of God*, that unconverted persons should come, and know that he does not require *grace* in order to their coming. For unless they know that men may come *without grace*, they cannot know that they themselves have a *right* to come, *being without grace.* And will any one assert and stand to it, that of necessity, all adult persons of every age, rank and condition of life, must be so versed in this controversy, as to have a certainty in this matter, in order to their coming to the Lord's supper? It would be most absurd for any to assert it a point of easy proof, the evidence of which is so clear and obvious to every one of every capacity, as to supersede all occasion for their being studied in divinity, in order to a certainty of its truth, that persons may come to the sacred table of the Lord, notwithstanding they know themselves to be *unconverted!* Especially considering, it seems a matter of plain fact, that the contrary to this opinion has been in general the judgment of

Protestant divines and churches, from the Reformation to this day; and that the most part of the greatest divines that have ever appeared in the world, who have spent their lives in the diligent, prayerful study of divinity, have been fixed in the reverse of that opinion. This is sufficient at least to show, that this opinion is not so plain as not to be a disputable point; and that the evidence of it is not so obvious to persons of the lowest capacity and little inquiry, as that all may come to a certainty in the matter, without difficulty and without study. I would humbly ask here, What has been the case in fact in *our* churches, who have practised for so many years on this principle? Can it be pretended, or was it ever supposed, that the communicants in general, even persons of mean intellectuals and low education, not excepting the very boys and girls of sixteen years old, that have been taken into the church, had so studied divinity, as not only to *think*, but know, that our pious forefathers, and almost all the Protestant and Christian divines in the world, have been in an *error* in this matter? And have people ever been taught the *necessity* of this previous knowledge? Has it ever been insisted upon, that before persons come to the Lord's supper, they must look so far into the case of a *right* to the Lord's supper, as to come not only to a full settled opinion, but even *certainty* in this point? And has any one minister or church in their admissions ever proceeded on the supposition, that all whom they took into communion were so versed in this controversy, as this comes to? Has it ever been the manner in examining them as to the sufficiency of their *knowledge*, to examine them as to their thorough acquaintance with this particular controversy? Has it been the manner to put by those who had only an opinion and not a certainty; even as the *priests* who could not find their *register*, were put by, till the matter could be determined by Urim and Thummim? And I dare appeal to every minister, and every member of a church that has been concerned in admitting communicants, whether they ever imagined, or it ever entered into their thought, concerning each one whose admission they have consented to, that they had looked so much into this matter, as not only to have settled their *opinion*, but to be arrived to a proper *certainty?*

(2.) I desire it may be remembered, the venerable author of the *Appeal to the Learned*, did in his ministry ever teach such doctrine from whence it will unavoidably follow, that no one *unconverted* man in the world can *know* he has warrant to come to the Lord's supper. For if any unconverted man has warrant to worship his Maker in this way, it must be because God has given him warrant by the revelation of his mind in the Holy Scriptures. And therefore, if any unconverted man not only thinks, but knows, he has warrant from God, he must of consequence, not only think, but know, that the Scriptures are the word of God. But I believe all that survive of the stated hearers of that eminent divine, and all who are acquainted with him, well remember it to be a doctrine which he often taught and much insisted on, that no natural man *knows* the Scripture to be the word of God; that although such may *think* so, yet they do not *know* it; and that at best they have but a *doubtful opinion:* and he often would express himself thus: *No natural man is thoroughly convinced, that the Scriptures are the word of God; if they were convinced, they would be gained.* Now if so, it is impossible any natural man in the world should ever *know*, it is his right, in his present condition to come to the Lord's supper. True, he may think it is his right, he may have that opinion; but he cannot *know* it; and so must not come, according to this argument. For it is only the *word of God* in the Holy Scriptures, that gives a man a *right* to worship the Supreme Being in this sacramental manner and to come to him in this

way, or any other, as one in covenant with him. The Lord's supper being no branch of natural worship, reason without institution is no ground of duty or right in this affair. And hence it is plainly impossible for those that do not so much as *know* the Scriptures are the word of God, to *know* they have any good ground of duty or right in this matter. Therefore, supposing unconverted men have a real right, yet since they have no *known* right, they have no warrant (according to the argument before us) to take and use their right; and what good then can their right do them? Or how can they excuse themselves from presumption, in claiming a *right*, which they do not *know* belongs to them? It is said, a *probable hope* that persons are regenerate, will not warrant them to come; if they come, they take a liberty to do that which they do not *know* God gives them leave to do, which is horrible presumption in them. But if this be good arguing, I may as well say, a *probable opinion* that unregenerate men may communicate, will not warrant such to do it. They must have *certain* knowledge of this; else, their *right* being uncertain, they run a dreadful venture in coming.

Answ. II. Men are liable to doubt concerning their *moral sincerity*, as well as saving grace. If an unconverted man, sensible of his being under the reigning power of sin, was about to appear solemnly to *own the covenant* (as it is commonly called), and to profess to give up himself to the service of God in a universal and persevering obedience; and at the same time knew, that if he did this, and sealed this profession at the Lord's supper, without *moral sincerity* (supposing him to understand the meaning of that phrase), he should *eat and drink judgment* to himself; and if, accordingly, his conscience being awakened, he was *afraid of God's judgment;* in this case, I believe the man would be every whit as liable to doubts about his *moral sincerity*, as godly men are about their gracious sincerity. And if it be not matter of fact, that natural men are so often exercised and troubled with doubts about their *moral sincerity*, as godly men about their regeneration, I suppose it to be owing only to this cause, viz., that godly men being of more tender consciences than those under the dominion of sin, are more afraid of God's judgments, and more ready to tremble at his word. The divines on the other side of the question, suppose it to be requisite, that communicants should believe the fundamental doctrines of religion *with all their heart* (in the sense of Acts viii. 37), the doctrine of *Three Persons and One God*, in particular: but I think there can be no reasonable doubt, that natural men, who have so weak and poor a kind of faith in these mysteries, if they were indeed as much afraid of the terrible consequences of their being deceived in this matter, or being not morally sincere in their profession of the truth, as truly gracious men are wont to be of delusion concerning their experience of a work of grace, or whether they are evangelically sincere in choosing God for their portion; the former would be as frequently exercised with doubts in the one case, as the latter in the other. And I very much question, whether any divine on the other side of the controversy would think it necessary, that natural men in professing those things should mean that they *know* they are *morally sincere*, or intend any more than that they trust they have that sincerity, so far as they know their own hearts. If a man should come to them, proposing to join with the church, and tell them, though indeed he was something afraid whether he believed the doctrine of the Trinity *with all his heart* (meaning in a moral sense), yet that he had often examined himself as to that matter with the utmost impartiality and strictness he was capable of, and on the whole he found reasons of probable hope, and his preponderating thought of himself was, that he was sincere in it; would they think such a one ought to be rejected, or would they

advise him not to come to the sacrament, because he did not certainly *know* he had this sincerity, but only *thought* he had it!

Answ. III. If we suppose sanctifying grace to be requisite in order to a being properly qualified, according to God's word, for an attendance on the Lord's supper; yet it will not follow, that a man must *know* he has this qualification, in order to his being capable of *conscientiously* attending it. If he *judges* that he has it, according to the best light he can obtain, on the most careful examination, with the improvement of such helps as he can get, the advice of his pastor, &c., he may be bound in conscience to attend. And the reason is this: Christians partaking of the Lord's supper is not a matter of mere *claim*, or *right* and *privilege*, but a matter of *duty* and *obligation*; being an affair wherein another (even God) has a claim and *demand on us*. And as we ought to be careful, on the one hand, that we proceed on good grounds in taking to ourselves a privilege, lest we take what we have no good claim to; so we should be equally careful, on the other hand, to proceed on good grounds in what we withhold from another, lest we do not withhold that from him which is his due, and which he justly challenges from us. Therefore in a case of this complex nature, where a thing is both a matter of *right* or *privilege* to us, and also a matter of *obligation* to another, or a *right* of his from us, the danger of proceeding *without* right and truth is equal both ways; and consequently, if we cannot be absolutely sure either way, here the best judgment we can form, after all proper endeavors to know the truth, must govern and determine us; otherwise we shall designedly do that whereby, according to our own judgment, we run the greatest risk; which is certainly contrary to reason. If the question were only what a man has a *right to*, he might forbear till he were sure: but the question is, not only whether *he* has a right to attend the supper, but whether *God* also has not a right to his attendance there? Supposing it were merely a privilege which I am allowed in a certain specified case, and there were no command to take the Lord's supper even in that case, but yet at the same time there was a command *not* to take *unless that be the case* in fact, then, supposing I am uncertain *whether that be the case with me or no*, it will be safest to abstain: but supposing I am not only forbidden to take it, unless that be the case with me, but positively commanded and required to take it, if that be the case in fact, then it is equally dangerous to *neglect* on uncertainties, as to *take* on uncertainties. In such a critical situation, a man must act according to the best of his judgment on his case; otherwise he wilfully runs into that which he thinks the greatest danger of the two.

Thus it is in innumerable cases in human life. I shall give one plain instance: a man ought not to take upon him the work of the ministry unless called to it in the providence of God; for a man has no right to *take this honor to himself, unless called of God.* Now let us suppose a young man of a liberal education, and well accomplished, to be at a loss whether it is the will of God that he should follow the work of the ministry; and he examines himself, and examines his circumstances, with great seriousness and solemn prayer, and well considers and weighs the appearances in divine Providence: and yet when he has done all, he has not come to a proper certainty that God calls him to this work: but however, it looks so to him, according to the best light he can obtain, and the most careful judgment he can form: now such a one appears *obliged in conscience* to give himself to this work. He must by no means neglect it under a notion that he must not *take this honor to himself*, till he *knows* he has a *right* to it; because, though it be indeed a *privilege*, yet it is not a matter of mere privilege, but a matter of duty too; and if he neglects it *under these cir-*

cumstances, he neglects what, according to his own best judgment, he *thinks* God requires of him, and calls him to; which is to sin against his *conscience*

As to the case of the *priests*, that could not find their *register* (Ezra ii.), alleged in *the Appeal to the Learned*, p. 64, it appears to me of no force in this argument; for if those *priests* had had never so great *assurance* in themselves of their pedigree being good, or of their being descended from *priests*, and should have *professed* such assurance, yet it would not have availed; nor did they abstain from the *priesthood*, because they wanted satisfaction themselves, but they were subject to the judgment of the *Sanhedrim;* whose rule to judge of the qualification spoken of, God had never made any profession of the parties themselves, but the visibility of the thing, and evidence of the fact to their own eyes: this matter of *pedigree* being an external object, ordinarily within the view of man; and not any qualification of heart. But this is not the case with regard to requisite qualifications for the *Lord's supper*, which being many of them internal, invisible things, seated in the mind and heart, such as the *belief* of a Supreme Being, &c.; God has made a credible *profession* of these things the rule to direct in admission of persons to the ordinance: who, in making this profession, are determined and governed by their own judgment of themselves, and not by any thing within the view of the church.

Objection X.

The natural consequence of the doctrine which has been maintained, is the bringing multitudes of persons of a *tender conscience* and true piety into great *perplexities;* who, being at a loss about the state of their souls, must needs be as much in suspense about their duty: and it is not reasonable to suppose, that God would order things so in the revelations of his will, as to *bring his own people into such perplexities.*

Answ. I. It is for *want* of the like tenderness of conscience which the godly have, that the other doctrine which insists on *moral sincerity*, does not naturally bring those who are received to communion on those principles, into the same *perplexities*, through their doubting of their *moral sincerity*, of their believing mysteries *with all their heart*, &c., as has been already observed. And a being *free* from perplexity, only through *stupidity* and hardness of heart, is *worse* than being in the greatest perplexity through tenderness of conscience.

Answ. II. Supposing the doctrine which I have maintained, be indeed the doctrine of *God's word*, yet it will not follow, that the *perplexities* true saints are in through doubting of their state, are effects owing to the *revelations of God's word.* Perplexity and distress of mind, not only on occasion of the Lord's supper, but innumerable other occasions, is the natural and unavoidable consequence of true Christians *doubting of their state.* But shall we therefore say, that all these perplexities are owing to the *word of God?* No, it is not owing to God, nor to any of his revelations, that true saints ever doubt of their state; his revelations are plain and clear, and his rules sufficient for men to determine their own condition by: but, for the most part, it is owing to their own *sloth*, and giving way to their *sinful* dispositions. Must God's institutions and revelations be answerable for all the perplexities men bring on themselves, through their own negligence and unwatchfulness? It is wisely ordered it should be so, that the saints should escape perplexity in no other way than that of a great strictness, diligence, and maintaining the lively, laborious, and self-denying exercises of religion.

It might as well be said, that it is unreasonable to suppose, God should

order things so as to bring his own people into such perplexities, as doubting saints are wont to be exercised with in the sensible approaches of *death;* when their doubts tend to vastly greater *perplexity*, than in their approaches to the Lord's table. If Christians would more thoroughly *exercise themselves unto godliness*, laboring always to *keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man*, it would be the way to have the comfort and taste the sweetness of religion. If they would *so run, not as uncertainly; so fight, not as they that beat the air;* it would be the way for them to escape perplexity, both in ordinances and providences, and to rejoice and enjoy God in both. Not but that doubting of their state sometimes arises from other causes, besides want of watchfulness; it may arise from melancholy, and some other peculiar disadvantages. But however, it is not owing to God's revelations nor institutions; which, whatsoever we may suppose them to be, will not prevent the perplexities of *such* persons.

Answ. III. It appears to me reasonable to suppose, that the doctrine I maintain, if *universally* embraced by God's people, however it might be an accidental occasion of *perplexity* in many instances, through their own infirmity and sin; yet, on the whole, would be a happy occasion of much more comfort to the saints than trouble, as it would have a tendency, on every return of the Lord's supper, to put them on the strictest examination and trial of the state of their souls, agreeable to that rule of the apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 28. The *neglect* of which great duty of frequent and thorough *self-examination*, seems to be one main cause of the darkness and perplexity of the saints, and the reason why they have so little comfort in ordinances, and so little comfort in general. Mr. Stoddard often taught his people, that *assurance* is *attainable*, and that those who are true saints might know it, if they would; i. e., if they would use proper means and endeavors in order to it. And if so, then certainly it is not just, to charge those perplexities on *God's institutions*, which arise through *men's negligence;* nor would it be just on the supposition of God's institutions being such as I suppose them to be.

Objection XI.

You may as well say, that unsanctified persons may not attend *any* duty of divine worship whatsoever, as that they may not attend the Lord's supper; for all duties of worship are *holy* and *require holiness*, in order to an acceptable performance of them, as well as that.

Answer. If this argument has any foundation at all, it has its foundation in the supposed truth of the following *propositions*, viz., *Whosoever is qualified for admission to one duty of divine worship, is qualified for admission to all;* and *he that is unqualified for one, and may be forbidden one, is unqualified for all, and ought to be allowed to attend none.* But certainly these propositions are not true. There are many who are *qualified* for some duties of worship, and may be *allowed*, and are by no means to be *forbidden* to attend them, who yet are *not* qualified for some others, nor by any means to be admitted to them. As every body grants, the unbaptized, the excommunicated, heretics, scandalous livers, &c., may be admitted to hear the *word* preached; nevertheless they are not to be allowed to come to the Lord's supper. Even excommunicated persons remain still under the law of the Sabbath, and are not to be forbidden to observe the Lord's day. Ignorant persons, such as have not knowledge sufficient for an approach to the Lord's table, yet are not excused from the duty of prayer: they may pray to God to instruct them, and assist them in obtain-

ing knowledge. They who have been educated in Arianism and Socinianism, and are not yet brought off from these fundamental errors, and so are by no means to be admitted to the Lord's supper, yet may pray to God to assist them in their studies, and guide them into the truth, and for all other mercies which they need Socrates, that great Gentile philosopher, who worshipped the true God, as he was led by the light of nature, might pray to God, and he attended his duty when he did so; although he knew not the revelation which God had made of himself in his word. That great philosopher that was contemporary with the Apostle Paul, I mean Seneca, who held one Supreme Being, and had in many respects right notions of the divine perfections and providence, though he did not embrace the gospel, which at that day was preached in the world; yet might pray to that Supreme Being whom he acknowledged. And if his brother Gallio at Corinth, when Paul preached there, had prayed to this Supreme Being to guide him into the truth, that he might know whether the doctrine Paul preached was true, he therein would have acted very becoming a reasonable creature, and any one would have acted unreasonably in forbidding him; but yet surely neither of these men was qualified for the Christian sacraments. So that it is apparent, there is and ought to be a distinction made between duties of worship, with respect to qualifications for them; and that which is a sufficient qualification for admission to one duty, is not so for all. And therefore the position is not true, which is the foundation whereon the whole weight of this argument rests. To say that although it be true there ought to be a distinction made, in admission to duties of worship, with regard to some qualifications, yet sanctifying grace is not one of those qualifications that make the difference; would be but a giving up the argument, and a perfect begging the question.

It is said, there can be no reason assigned, why unsanctified persons may attend *other* duties of worship and not the *Lord's supper*. But I humbly conceive this must be an inadvertence. For there is a reason very obvious from that necessary and very notable *distinction* among duties of worship which follows:

1. There are *some duties* of worship, that imply a *profession of God's covenant;* whose very nature and design is an exhibition of those vital active principles and inward exercises, wherein consists the *condition of the covenant of grace*, or that union of soul to God, which is the union between Christ and his spouse, entered into by an inward, hearty consenting to that covenant. Such are the Christian *sacraments*, whose very design is to make and confirm a *profession* of compliance with that covenant, and whose very nature is to exhibit or express the uniting acts of the soul: those sacramental duties, therefore, cannot, by any whose hearts do not really consent to that covenant, and whose souls do not truly close with Christ, be attended without either their being self-deceived, or else wilfully making a false profession, and lying in a very aggravated manner.

2. There are *other duties*, which are *not* in their own nature an exhibition of a covenant union with God, or of any compliance with the condition of the *covenant of grace;* but are the expression of *general virtues*, or virtues in their largest extent, including both special and common. Thus *prayer*, or asking mercy of God, is in its own nature *no* profession of a compliance with the *covenant* of grace: it is an expression of some belief of the being of a God, an expression of some sense of our wants, some sense of our need of help, and some sense of a need of God's help, some sense of our dependence, &c., but not only such a sense of these things as is spiritual and saving. Indeed there are

some prayers proper to be made by *saints*, and many things proper to be expressed by them in prayer, which imply the profession of a spiritual union of heart to God through Christ; but such as no Heathen, no heretic, nor natural man whatever, can or ought to make. Prayer in general, and asking mercy and help from God, is no more a profession of consent to the *covenant* of grace, than reading the Scriptures, or meditation, or performing any duty of morality and natural religion. A Mahometan may as well ask mercy as hear instruction; and any natural man may as well express his desires to God, as hear when God declares his will to him. It is true, when an unconverted man prays, the *manner* of his doing of it is sinful: but when a natural man, knowing himself to be so, comes to the Lord's supper, the very *matter* of what he does, in respect of the profession he there makes, and his pretension to lay hold of God's covenant, is a *lie*, and a lie told in the most solemn manner.

In a word, the venerable Mr. Stoddard himself, in his *Doctrine of Instituted Churches*, has taught us to distinguish between *instituted* and *natural* acts of religion. The *word* and *prayer* he places under the head of moral duty, and considers as *common* to all; but the sacraments, according to what he says there, being *instituted*, are of *special* administration, and must be *limited* agreeable to the institution.

Objection XII.

The Lord's supper has a proper *tendency* to promote men's *conversion*, being an affecting representation, of the greatest and most important things of God's word: it has a proper *tendency* to awaken and humble sinners; here being a discovery of the terrible anger of God for sin, by the infliction of the curse upon Christ, when sin was imputed to him; and the representation here made of the dying love of Christ has a tendency to draw the hearts of sinners from sin to God, &c.

ANSWER. Unless it be an evident truth, that *what the Lord's supper may have tendency to promote, the same it was appointed to promote*, nothing follows from this argument. If the argument affords any consequence, the consequence is built on the *tendency* of the Lord's supper. And if the consequence be good and strong on this foundation, as drawn from such premises, then wherever the *premises hold*, the *consequence* holds; otherwise it must appear, that the *premises* and *consequence* are not connected. And now let us see how it is in *fact*. Do not *scandalous* persons need to have these very effects wrought in their hearts, which have been mentioned? Yes, surely; they need them in a special manner: they need to be awakened; they need to have an affecting discovery of that terrible wrath of God against sin, which was manifested in a public manner by the terrible effects of God's wrath in the sufferings of his own incarnate Son: gross sinners need this in some respect more than others: they need to have their hearts broken by an affecting view of the great and important things of God's word: they need especially to fly to Christ for refuge, and therefore need to have their hearts drawn. And seeing the *Lord's supper* has so great a *tendency* to promote these things, if the consequence from the *tendency* of the Lord's supper, as inferring the end of its *appointment*, be good, then it must be a consequence also well inferred, that the Lord's supper was appointed for the reclaiming and bringing to repentance *scandalous* persons.

Here, for any to go to turn this off, by saying, *Scandalous persons are expressly forbid*, is but a giving up the argument, and a begging the question It is a giving up the argument; since it allows the *consequence* not to be good For it allows, that notwithstanding the proper *tendency* of the Lord's supper to

promote a design, yet it may be so that the Lord's supper was not appointed with a view to promote that end. And it is a begging the question; since it supposes, that *unconverted men are not evidently forbidden*, as well as scandalous persons; which is the thing in controversy. If they be *evidently* forbid, that is as much to reasonable creatures (who need nothing but good evidence) as if they were expressly forbidden. To say here that the *Lord's supper is a converting ordinance only to orderly members*, and that *there is another ordinance appointed for bringing scandalous persons to repentance*, this is no solution of the difficulty; but it is only another instance of yielding up the argument and begging the question: for it plainly concedes, that the *tendency* of an ordinance does not prove it *appointed* to all the ends, which it seems to have a tendency to promote: and also supposes, that there is not any *other* ordinance, appointed for the converting of sinners that are moral and orderly in their lives, *exclusive of this*, which is the thing in question.

It is at best but very precarious arguing, from the seeming *tendency* of things, to the *divine appointment*, or God's will and disposition with respect to the *use* of those things. It looks as though it would have had a great *tendency* to convince the Scribes and Pharisees, and to promote their conversion, if they had been admitted into the Mount when Christ was *transfigured:* but yet it was not the will of Christ, that they should be admitted there, or any other but Peter, James and John. It seems as though it would have had a very great *tendency* to convince and bring to repentance the unbelieving Jews, if they had been allowed to see and converse freely with Christ after his *resurrection*, and see him *ascend* into heaven: but yet it was the will of God, that none but *disciples* should be admitted to these privileges. So it seems as though it might have had a good tendency, if *all* that were sincere followers of Christ, women as well as men, had been allowed to be *present* at the institution of the *Lord's supper:* but yet it is commonly thought none were admitted beside the *Apostles.*

Indeed the ever honored author of the *Appeal to the Learned* has supplied me with the true and proper answer to this objection, in the following words, pp. 27, 28: "The efficacy of the Lord's supper does depend upon the blessing of God. *Whatever* TENDENCY *ordinances have in their* OWN NATURE *to be serviceable* to men, yet they will not prevail any further than God doth bless them. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*, 2 Cor. x. 4. It is God that teaches men to profit, and makes them profitable and serviceable to men's souls. There is reason to hope for a divine blessing on the *Lord's supper*, when it is administered to those that it *ought* to be administered to: God's *blessing* is to be expected in God's *way*. If men act according to their own humors and fancies, and do not keep in the way of *obedience*, it is presumption to expect God's blessing. Matt. xv. 9, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* But when *they* are admitted to the Lord's supper that *God would have to be* admitted, there is ground to hope that he will make it profitable."

Objection XIII.

All that are members of the *visible church* and in the *external covenant*, and neither ignorant nor scandalous, are commanded to perform all *external covenant duties;* and particularly they are commanded to attend the *Lord's supper.* in those words of Christ, *This do in remembrance of me.*

ANSWER. This argument is of no force, without first taking for granted the very thing in question. For this is plainly supposed in it, that however

these commands are given to such as are in the *external covenant*, yet they are not given indefinitely, but with exceptions and reserves, and do not immediately reach *all* such; they do not reach those who are *unqualified*, though they be in the external covenant. Now the question is, *Who* are these that are *unqualified?* The objection supposes, that only ignorant and scandalous persons are so. But *why* are they only supposed unqualified; and not *unconverted* persons too? Because it is taken for granted, that these are *not* unqualified. And thus the grand point in question is supposed, instead of being proved. Why are these limitations only singled out, *neither ignorant nor scandalous;* and not others as well? The answer must be, because these are *all* the limitations which the Scripture makes: but this now is the very thing in question. Whereas the business of an argument is to *prove*, and not to suppose, or take for granted, the very thing which is to be proved.

If it be here said, It is with good reason that those who are ignorant or scandalous alone are supposed to be excepted in God's command, and obligations of the covenant; for the covenant spoken of in the objection, is the *external covenant*, and this requires only *external duties;* which alone are what lie within the reach of man's natural power, and so in the reach of his legal power: God does not command or require what men have no natural power to perform, and which cannot be performed before something else, some antecedent duty, is performed, which antecedent duty is not in their natural power.

I reply, Still things are but *supposed*, which should be proved, and which want confirmation.

(1.) It is *supposed* that those who have *externally* (i. e., by oral profession and promise) entered into God's covenant, are thereby obliged to no more than the external duties of that covenant: which is not proved, and I humbly conceive, is certainly not the true state of the case. They who have *externally* entered into God's covenant, are by external profession and engagements entered into that one only *covenant of grace*, which the Scripture informs us of; and therefore are obliged to fulfil the duties of *that* covenant, which are chiefly *internal*. The children of Israel, when they *externally* entered into covenant with God at Mount Sinai, promised to perform all the duties of the covenant, to obey all the ten commandments spoken by God in their hearing, and written in tables of stone, which were therefore called, *The Tables of the covenant;* the sum of which ten commandments was, *to* LOVE *the Lord their God with all their* HEART, *and with all their* SOUL, *and to* LOVE *their neighbor as themselves;* which, principally at least, are *internal* duties. In particular, they promised *not to covet;* which is an *internal* duty. They promised to *have no other God before the Lord;* which implied that they would in their hearts regard no other being or object whatever above God, or in equality with him, but would give him their supreme respect.

(2.) It is *supposed*, that God does not *require impossibilities* of men, in this sense, that he does not require those things of them which are out of their *natural* power, and particularly that he does not require them to be *converted*. But this is not proved; nor can I reconcile it with the tenor of the Scripture revelation. And the chief advocates for the doctrine I oppose have themselves abundantly asserted the contrary. The venerable author forementioned, as every body knows, that knew him, always taught, that God justly requires men to be *converted*, to repent of their sins, and turn to the Lord, to close with Christ, and savingly to believe in him; and that in refusing to accept of Christ and turn to God, they disobeyed the divine commands, and were guilty of the most heinous sin; and that their moral inability was no excuse.

(3.) It is *supposed*, that God does not command men to do those things which are not to be done till *something else* is done, that is not within the reach of men's natural ability. This also is not proved; nor do I see how it can be true, even according to the principles of those who insist on this objection. The forementioned memorable divine ever taught, that God commandeth natural men without delay to *believe* in Christ. And yet he always held, that it was impossible for them to believe till they had by a preceding act submitted to the sovereignty of God; which yet he held, men never could do of *themselves*, nor till humbled and bowed by powerful convictions of God's Spirit. Again, he taught, that God commandeth natural men to love him with all their heart. And yet he held, that this could not be till men had first *believed* in Christ; the exercise of love being a fruit of faith; and believing in Christ, he supposed not to be within the reach of man's *natural* ability. Further, he held, that God requireth of all men, holy, spiritual, and acceptable *obedience;* and yet that such obedience is not within the reach of their *natural ability;* and not only so, but that there must first be *love* to God, before there could be new obedience, and that this love to God is not within the reach of men's *natural ability.* Nor yet only so, but that before this love there must be *faith*, which faith is not within the reach of man's natural power. And still, not only so, but that before faith there must be the *knowledge* of God, which knowledge is not in *natural* men's reach. And once more, not only so, but that even before the knowledge of God there must be a thorough *humiliation*, which humiliation men could not work in themselves by any natural power of their own. Now must it needs be thought, notwithstanding all these things, *unreasonable* to suppose, that God should *command* those whom he has nourished and brought up, to honor him by giving an open testimony of love to him; only because wicked men cannot *testify* love till they *have* love, and love is not in their natural power! And is it any good excuse in the sight of God, for one who is under the highest obligations to him, and yet refuses him suitable honor by openly testifying his love of him, to plead that he has no love to testify; but, on the contrary, has an infinitely unreasonable hatred? God may most reasonably require a proper testimony and profession of love to him; and yet it may also be reasonable to suppose at the same time, he forbids men to lie; or to declare that they have love, when they have none. Because, though it be supposed, that God requires men to testify love to him, yet he requires them to do it in a right way, and in the true order, viz., first *loving* him, and then *testifying* their love.

(4.) I do not see how it can be true, that a man, as he is naturally, has not a *legal* power to be converted, accept of Christ, love God, &c. By a *legal power* to do a thing, is plainly meant such power as brings a person properly within the reach of a *legal obligation*, or the obligation of a law or command to do that thing. But he that has such natural faculties, as render him a proper subject of moral government, and as speak it a fit and proper thing for him to love God, &c., and as give him a natural capacity herefor; such a one may properly be *commanded*, and put under the obligation of a *law* to do things so reasonable; notwithstanding any native aversion and moral inability in him to do his duty, arising from the power of sin. This also, I must observe, was a known doctrine of Mr Stoddard's, and what he ever taught.

Objection XIV.

Either *unsanctified* persons may lawfully come to the Lord's supper, or it is unlawful for them to *carry themselves as saints;* but it is not unlawful for them to carry themselves as saints.

ANSWER. It is the duty of unconverted men, both to become saints, and to behave as saints. The Scripture rule is, *Make the tree good, that the fruit may be good.* Mr. Stoddard himself never supposed, that the fruit of *saints* was to be expected from men, or could possibly be brought forth by them in truth, till they *were* saints.

And I see not how it is true that unconverted men ought, in every respect, to do those external things which it is the duty of a godly man to do. It is the duty of a godly man, conscious of his having given his heart unto the Lord, to profess his love to God and his esteem of him above all, his unfeigned faith in Christ, &c., and in his closet devotions to thank God for these graces as the fruit of the Spirit in him: but it is not the duty of another that really has no faith, nor love to God, to do thus. Neither any more is it a natural man's duty to profess these things in the *Lord's supper.* Mr. Stoddard taught it to be the duty of converts on many occasions, to profess their faith and love and other graces *before men* by relating their *experiences* in conversation: but it would be great wickedness for such as know themselves to be not *saints*, thus to do; because they would speak falsely, and utter lies in so doing. Now, for the like reason, it would be very sinful, for men to profess and seal their consent to the covenant of grace in the Lord's supper, when they know at the same time that they do *not* consent to it, nor have their hearts at all in the affair.

Objection XV.

This scheme will *keep out* of the church some *true saints;* for there are some such who determine against themselves, and their prevailing judgment is, that they are *not* saints: and we had better let in several hypocrites, than exclude one true child of God.

ANSWER. I think, it is much better to insist on some *visibility* to reason, of true *saintship*, in admitting members, even although this, through men's infirmity and darkness, and Satan's temptations, be an occasion of some true saints' abstaining; than by express liberty given, to open the door to as many as please, of those who have no visibility of real saintship, and make no profession of it, nor pretensions to it; and that because this method tends to the ruin and great reproach of the Christian church, and also to the ruin of the persons admitted.

1. It tends to the reproach and ruin of the Christian church. *For by the rule which God hath given for admissions, if it be carefully attended* (it is said), MORE *unconverted than converted persons, will be admitted.* It is then confessedly the way to have the greater part of the members of the Christian church *ungodly* men; yea, so much greater, that the godly shall be but *few* in comparison of the ungodly; agreeable to their interpretation of that saying of Christ, *many are called, but few are chosen.* Now if this be an exact state of the case, it will demonstrably follow, on Scripture principles, that the opening the door so wide has a direct tendency to bring things to that pass, that the far greater part of the members of Christian churches shall not be persons of so much as a serious conscientious character, but such as are without even *moral sincerity*, and do not make religion at all their business, neglecting and casting off secret prayer and other duties, and living a life of carnality and vanity, so far as they can, consistently with avoiding church censures; which possibly may be sometimes to a great degree. Ungodly men may be morally sober, serious and conscientious, and may have what is called *moral sincerity*, for a while; may have these things in a considerable measure, when they first come into the church: but if their hearts are not changed, there is no probability at all of these things continu-

ing lorg. The Scripture has told us, that this *their goodness* is apt to vanish *like the morning cloud and early dew.* How can it be expected but that their religion should in a little time wither away, which has *no root?* How can it be expected, that the *lamp* should burn long, without *oil in the vessel* to feed it? If lust be unmortified, and left in reigning power in the heart, it will sooner or later prevail; and at length sweep away *common grace* and *moral sincerity,* however excited and maintained for a while by conviction and temporary affections. It will happen to them according to the true proverb, *The dog is returned to his vomit; and the swine that was washed to his wallowing in the mire.* It is said of the hypocrite, *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?* And thus our churches will be likely to be such congregations as the Psalmist said he hated, and *would not sit with,* Psal. xxvi. 4, 5: "I have not sat with vain persons, nor will I go in with dissemblers; I have hated the congregation of evil doers, nor will I sit with the wicked." This will be the way to have the Lord's table ordinarily furnished with such guests as allow themselves to live in known sin, and so such as meet together from time to time only to crucify Christ afresh, instead of commemorating his crucifixion with the repentance, faith, gratitude, and love of friends. And this is the way to have the governing part of the church such as are not even conscientious men, and are careless about the honor and interest of religion. And the direct tendency of that is, in process of time, to introduce a prevailing negligence in discipline, and carelessness in seeking ministers of a pious and worthy character. And the next step will be the churches being filled with persons openly vicious in manners, or else scandalously erroneous in opinions: it is well if this be not already the case in fact with some churches that have long professed and practised on the principles I oppose. And if these principles should be professed and proceeded on by Christian churches everywhere, the natural tendency of it would be, to have the greater part of what is called the church of Christ, through the world, made up of vicious and erroneous persons. And how greatly would this be to the reproach of the Christian church, and of the holy name and religion of Jesus Christ in the sight of all nations?*

And now is it not better to have a few real Christians kept back through darkness and scruples, than to open a door for letting in such universal ruin as this? To illustrate it by a familiar comparison; is it not better, when England is at war with France, to keep out of the British realm a few loyal Englishmen, than to give leave for as many treacherous Frenchmen to come in as please?

2. This way tends to the eternal ruin of the parties admitted: for it lets in such, yea, it persuades such to come in, as *know themselves to be impenitent and unbelieving,* in a dreadful manner to *take God's name in vain; in vain to worship him,* and abuse sacred things, by solemnly performing those external acts and rites in the name of God, which are instituted for declarative signs and professions of repentance toward God, faith in Christ, and love to him, at the same time that they *know* themselves destitute of those things which they profess to have. And is it not better, that some *true saints,* through their own weakness and misunderstanding, should be kept away from the Lord's table, which will not keep such out of heaven, than voluntarily to bring in multi-

* And this by the way answers another *objection* which some have made, viz., that the way I plead for, tends to keep the church of Christ *small,* and hinder the growth of it. Whereas, I think the contrary tends to keep it small, as it is the wickedness of its members, that above all things in the world prejudices mankind against it; and is the chief stumbling-block, that hinders the propagation of Christianity, and so the growth of the Christian church. But holiness would cause the light of the church to shine so as to induce others to resort to it.

tudes of *false professors* to partake unworthily, and in effect to seal their own condemnation?

Objection XVI.

You *cannot keep out hypocrites*, when all is said and done; but *as many* graceless persons will be likely to get into the church in the way of a *profession of godliness*, as if nothing were insisted on, but a freedom from public scandal.

Answer. It may possibly be so in some places, through the misconduct of ministers and people, by remissness in their inquiries, carelessness as to the proper matter of a profession, or setting up some mistaken rules of judgment; neglecting those things which the Scripture insists upon as the most essential articles in the character of a real saint; and substituting others in the room of them; such as impressions on the imagination, instead of renewing influences on the heart; pangs of affection, instead of the habitual temper of the mind; a certain method and order of impressions and suggestions, instead of the nature of things experienced, &c. But to say that in churches where the nature, the notes, and evidences of true Christianity, as described in the Scriptures, are well understood, taught and observed, *there* as many *hypocrites* are likely to get in; or to suppose, that *there* as many of those persons of an honest character, who are well instructed in these rules, and well conducted by them, and judging of themselves by these rules, do think themselves true saints, and accordingly make profession of godliness, and are admitted as saints in a judgment of rational charity; to suppose, I say, *as many of these* are likely to be carnal, unconverted men, as of those who make no such pretence and have no such hope, nor exhibit any such evidences to the eye of a judicious charity, is not so much an objection against the doctrine I am defending, as a reflection upon the Scripture itself, with regard to the rules it gives, either for persons to judge of their own state, or for others to form a charitable judgment by, as if they were of little or no service at all. We are in miserable circumstances indeed, if the rules of God's holy word in things of such infinite importance, are so ambiguous and uncertain, like the Heathen oracles. And it would be very strange, if in these days of the gospel, when God's mind is revealed with such great plainness of speech, and the canon of Scripture is completed, it should ordinarily be the case in fact, that those who, having a right doctrinal understanding of the Scripture, and judging themselves by its rules, do probably conclude or seriously hope of themselves, that they are real saints, are *as many* of them in a state of sin and condemnation, as others who have no such rational hope concerning their good estate, nor pretend to any special experiences in religion.

Objection XVII.

If a *profession of godliness* be a thing required in order to admission into the church, there being some *true saints* who *doubt* of their state, and from a *tender conscience* will not dare to make such a profession; and there being *others*, that have no grace, nor much tenderness of conscience, but great *presumption* and *forwardness*, who will boldly make the highest profession of religion, and so will get admittance; it will hence come to pass, that the very thing, which will in effect procure for the latter an admission, rather than the former, will be their presumption and wickedness.

Answ. 1. It is no sufficient objection against the *wholesomeness* of a rule

established for the regulating the *civil* state of mankind, that in some instances men's wickedness may take *advantage* by that *rule*, so that even their wickedness shall be the very thing, which by an abuse of that rule, procures them temporal *honors* and *privileges*. For such is the present state of man in this evil world, that good rules, in many instances, are liable to be thus abused and perverted. As for instance, there are many human laws, or rules accounted wholesome and necessary, by which an accused or suspected person's own solemn profession of innocency, his asserting it upon *oath*, shall be the condition of acquittance and impunity; and the want of such a protestation or profession shall expose him to the punishment. And yet by an abuse of these rules, in some instances, the horrid sin of deliberate *perjury*, or that most presumptuous wickedness of false swearing, shall be the very thing that acquits a man. While another of a more tender conscience, who *fears an oath*, must suffer the penalty of the law.

2. Those rules, by all wise lawgivers, are accounted wholesome, which prove of *general* good tendency, notwithstanding any bad consequences arising in some particular instances. And as to the ecclesiastical rule now in question, of admission to sacraments on a *profession* of *godliness*, when attended with requisite circumstances; although this rule in particular instances may be an occasion of some *tender-hearted* Christians *abstaining*, and some *presumptuous* sinners being admitted, yet that does not hinder but that a proper visibility of holiness to the eye of reason, or a probability of it in a judgment of rational Christian charity, may this way be maintained, as the proper qualification of candidates for admission. Nor does it hinder but that it may be reasonable and wholesome for mankind, in their outward conduct, to regulate themselves by such probability; and that this should be a reasonable and good rule for the church to regulate themselves by in their admissions; notwithstanding its so happening in particular instances, that things are *really* diverse from, yea, the very reverse of, what they are visibly. Such a *profession* as has been insisted on, when attended with *requisite circumstances*, carries in it a rational credibility in the judgment of Christian charity. For it ought to be attended with an honest and sober character, and with evidences of good doctrinal knowledge, and with all proper, careful, and diligent instructions of a prudent pastor. And though the pastor is not to act as a *searcher of the heart*, or a *lord of conscience* in this affair, yet that hinders not but that he may and ought to inquire particularly into the experiences of the souls committed to his care and charge, that he may be under the best advantages to instruct and advise them, to apply the teachings and rules of God's word unto them, for their self-examination, to be *helpers of their joy*, and promoters of their salvation. However, finally, not any pretended extraordinary skill of *his* in discerning the heart, but the person's *own* serious profession concerning what he finds in his own soul, after he has been well instructed, must regulate the public conduct with respect to him, where there is no other external visible thing to contradict and overrule it. And a serious profession of godliness, under these circumstances, carries in it a visibility to the eye of the church's rational and Christian judgment.

3. If it be still insisted on, that a *rule* of admission into the church cannot be *good*, which is liable to such a kind of *abuse* as that forementioned, I must observe, this will overthrow the rules that the *objectors* themselves go by in their admissions. For they insist upon it, that a man must not only have knowledge and be free of scandal, but must appear *orthodox*, and profess the common faith. Now *presumptuous lying*, for the sake of the honor of being in the church, having children baptized, and voting in ecclesiastical affairs, may pos-

sibly be the very thing that brings some men into the church by this rule, while greater *tenderness of conscience* may be the very thing that keeps others out. For instance, a man who secretly in his mind gives no credit to the commonly received doctrine of the *Trinity*, yet may, by pretending an assent to it, and in hypocrisy making a public profession of it, get into the church, when at the same time another, that equally disbelieves it, but has a more tender conscience than to allow himself in solemnly telling a lie, may by that very means be kept off from the communion, and lie out of the church.

Objection XVIII.

It seems hardly reasonable to suppose, that the only wise God has made men's *opinion of themselves*, and a *profession* of it, the term of their admission to church privileges; when we know, that very often the *worst* men have the *highest* opinion of themselves.

Answ. I. It must be granted me, that in fact this is the case, if any proper *profession* at all is expected and required, whether it be of sanctifying grace, or of *moral sincerity*, or any thing else that is *good:* and to be sure, nothing is required to be professed, or is *worthy* to be professed, any further than it is *good.*

Answ. II. If *some* things, by the confession of all, must be *professed,* for that very reason, because they are *good*, and of great importance: then certainly it must be owned very unreasonable, to say, that those things wherein true *holiness* consists are *not* to be professed, or that a profession of them should *not* be required, for that same reason, because they are *good*, even in the highest degree, and infinitely the most important and most necessary things of any in the world: and it is unreasonable to say, that it is the less to be expected we should profess sincere friendship to Christ, because friendship to Christ, is the most *excellent* qualification of any whatsoever, and the contrary the most odious. How absurd is it to say this, merely under a notion that for a man to profess what is so good, and so reasonable, is to profess a *high opinion of himself!*

Answ. III. Through some of the *worst* men are apt to entertain the *highest opinion of themselves*, yet their self-conceit is no *rule* to the church: but the apparent *credibility* of men's *profession* is to be the ground of ecclesiastical proceedings.

Objection XIX.

If it be necessary that *adult* persons should make a profession of godliness, in order to their own admission to *baptism*, then undoubtedly it is necessary in order to their *children's* being baptized on their account. For parents cannot convey to their children a right to this sacrament, by virtue of any qualification *lower* than those requisite in order to their own right: children being admitted to baptism only as being as it were parts and members of their parents. And besides, the act of parents in offering up their *children* in a sacrament, which is a seal of the covenant of grace, is in them a solemn attending that sacrament *as* persons *interested* in the covenant, and a public manifestation of their approving and consenting to it, as truly as if they then offered up themselves to God in that ordinance. Indeed it implies a renewed offering up themselves with their children, and devoting both jointly to God in covenant; *themselves*, with their children, as parts of themselves. But now what fearful work will such doctrine make amongst us! We shall have multitudes *unbaptized,* who will

go about without the external badge of Christianity, and so in that respect will be like Heathen. And this is the way to have the land full of persons who are destitute of that which is spoken of in Scripture as ordinarily requisite to men's *salvation;* and it will bring a *reproach* on vast multitudes, with the families they belong to; and not only so, but will tend to make them profane and Heathenish; for by thus treating our children, as though *they had no part in the Lord* we shall *cause them to cease from fearing the Lord;* agreeable to Josh. xxii. 24, 25.

Answ. I. As to children's being destitute of that which is spoken of in Scripture as one thing ordinarily *requisite to salvation;* I would observe, that baptism can do their souls no good any otherwise than through God's blessing attending it; but we have no reason to expect his blessing with baptism, if administered to those that it does *not* belong to by *his institution.*

Answ. II. As to the *reproach*, which will be brought on parents and children, by children's going without baptism, through the parents neglecting a profession of godliness, and so visibly remaining among the unconverted; if any insist on this objection, I think it will savor of much *unreasonableness* and even *stupidity.*

It will savor of an *unreasonable* spirit. Is it not enough, if God freely offers men to own their children and to give them the honor of baptism, in case the parents will turn from sin and relinquish their enmity against him, heartily give up themselves and their children to him, and take upon them the profession of godliness?—If men are truly *excusable*, in not turning to God through Christ, in not believing with the heart, and in not confessing with the mouth, why do not we openly plead that they are so? And why do not we teach sinners, that they are *not to blame* for continuing among the enemies of Christ, and neglecting and despising his great salvation? If they are not at all excusable in this, and it be wholly owing to their own indulged lusts, that they refuse sincerely to give up themselves and their children to God, then how unreasonable is it for them to complain that their children are denied the honor of having God's mark set upon them as some of his? If parents are angry at this, such a temper shows them to be very senseless of their own vile treatment of the blessed God. Should a prince send to a traitor in prison, and, upon opening the prison doors, make him the offer, that if he would come forth and submit himself to him, he should not only be pardoned himself, but both he and his children should have such and such badges of honor conferred upon them: yet if the rebel's enmity and stoutness of spirit against his prince is such, that he could not find in his heart to comply with the gracious offer, will he have any cause to be angry, that his children have not those badges of honor given them? And besides, it is very much owing to *parents*, that there are so many *young* people who can make no profession of godliness: they have themselves therefore to blame, if the case be so, that proceeding on the principles which have been maintained there is like to rise a generation of unbaptized persons. If ancestors had thoroughly done their duty to their posterity, in instructing, praying for, and governing their children, and setting them good examples, there is reason to think, the case would have been far otherwise.

The insisting on this objection would savor of much stupidity. For the objection seems to suppose the country to be full of those that are unconverted, and so exposed every moment to eternal damnation; yet it seems we do not hear such great and general complaints and lamentable outcries concerning this. Now why is it looked upon so dreadful, to have great numbers going without the *name* and honorable *badge* of Christianity, that there should be loud and general exclamations concerning such a calamity; when at the same time it is

no more resented and laid to heart, that such multitudes go without the thing, which is infinitely more dreadful? Why are we so silent about this? What is the *name* good for, without the *thing?* Can parents bear to have their children go about the world in the most odious and dangerous state of soul, in reality the children of the devil, and condemned to eternal burnings; when at the same time they cannot bear to have them disgraced by going without the honor of being *baptized?* A high honor and privilege this is; yet how can parents be contented with the *sign*, exclusive of the thing signified? Why should they covet the external honor of their children, while they are so careless about the spiritual blessing? Does not this argue a senselessness of their own misery, as well as of their children's, in being in a *Christless* state? If a man and his child were both together bitten by a viper, dreadfully swollen, and like to die, would it not argue *stupidity* in the parent, to be anxiously concerned only about his child's having on a dirty garment in such circumstances, and angry at others for not putting some outward ornament upon it? But the difference in this present case is infinitely greater, and more important. Let parents pity their poor children, because they are without baptism; and pity themselves who are in danger of everlasting misery, while they have no interest in the covenant of grace, and so have no right to covenant favors or honors for themselves nor children. No religious honors to be obtained in any other way than by real religion, are much worth contending for. And in truth, it is no honor at all to a man, to have merely the outward badges of a Christian, without being a Christian indeed; any more than it would be an honor to a man that has no learning, but is a mere dunce, to have a degree at college; or than it is for a man who has no valor, but is a grand coward, to have an honorable commission in an army; which only serves, by the lifting him up, to expose him to the deeper reproach, and sets him forth as the more notable object of contempt.

Answ. III. Concerning the *tendency* of this way of confining baptism to professors of godliness and their children, to promote irreligion and profaneness; I would observe, First, That Christ is best able to *judge* of the tendency of his own *institutions.* Secondly, I am bold to say, that the supposing this principle and practice to have such a tendency, is a great *mistake*, contrary to Scripture and plain reason and experience. Indeed such a tendency it would have, to shut men out from having *any part in the Lord* (in the sense of the two tribes and half, Josh. xxii. 25), or to fence them out by such a partition wall as formerly was between Jews and Gentiles; and so to shut them out as to tell them, if they were ever so much disposed to serve God, he was not ready to accept them; according to that notion the Jews seem to have had of the uncircumcised Gentiles. But only to forbear giving men honors they have no title to, and not to compliment them with the name and badge of God's people and children, while they pretend to nothing but what is consistent with their being his enemies, this has no such tendency: but rather the contrary has very much this tendency. For is it not found by constant experience through all ages, that blind, corrupt mankind, in matters of religion are strongly disposed to rest in a *name*, instead of the *thing;* in the shadow, instead of the substance; and to make themselves easy with the former, in the neglect of the latter? This overvaluing of common grace, and *moral sincerity*, as it is called; this building so much upon them, making them the conditions of enjoying the seals of God's covenant, and the appointed privileges, and honorable and sacred badges of God's children; this, I cannot but think, naturally tends to soothe and flatter the pride of vain man, while it tends to aggrandize those things in men's eyes,

which they, of themselves, are strongly disposed to magnify and trust in without such encouragements to prompt them to it, yea, against all discouragements and dissuasives that can possibly be used with them.

This way of proceeding greatly tends to establish the negligence of parents, and to confirm the stupidity and security of wicked children. If *baptism* were *denied* to all children, whose parents did not *profess godliness*, and in a judgment of rational charity appear *real saints*, it would tend to excite pious heads of families to more thorough care and pains in the religious education of their children, and to more fervent prayer for them, that they might be converted in youth, before they enter into a married state; and so if they have children, the entail of the covenant be secured. And it would tend to awaken *young* people themselves, as yet unconverted, especially when about to settle in the world. Their having no right to Christian privileges for their children, in case they should become parents, would tend to lead them at such a time seriously to reflect on their own awful state; which, if they do not get out of it, must lay a foundation for so much calamity and reproach to their families. And if, after their becoming parents, they still remain unconverted, the melancholy thought of their children's going about without so much as the external mark of Christians, would have a continual tendency to put them in mind of, and affect them with their own sin and folly in neglecting to turn to God, by which they bring such visible calamity and disgrace on themselves and families: they would have this additional motive continually to stir them up to seek grace for themselves and their children: whereas the contrary practice has a natural tendency to quiet the minds of persons, both in their own and their children's unregeneracy. Yea, may it not be suspected, that the way of baptizing the children of such as never make any proper profession of godliness, is an expedient originally invented for that very end, to give ease to ancestors with respect to their posterity, in times of general declension and degeneracy?

This way of proceeding greatly tends to establish the stupidity and irreligion of *children*, as well as negligence of parents. It is certain that unconverted parents do never truly give up their children to God; since they do not truly give up themselves to him. And if neither of the parents appears truly pious, in the judgment of rational charity, there is not in this case any ground to expect that the children will be *brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, or that they will have any thing worthy the name of a Christian education, how solemnly soever the parents may promise it. The faithfulness of Abraham was such as might be trusted in this matter. See Gen. xviii. 19 But men that are not so much as visibly godly, upon what grounds are they to be trusted? How can it be reasonably expected, that they should faithfully bring up their children for GOD, who were never sincerely willing that their children or themselves should be his? And it will be but presumption, to expect that those children who are never given up to God, nor brought up for him, should prove religious and be God's children. There is no manner of reason to expect any other than that such children ordinarily will grow up in irreligion, whether they are baptized or not. And for persons to go about with the name and visible seal of God, and the sacred badge of Christianity upon them, having had their bodies, by a holy ordinance, consecrated to God as his temples, yet living in irreligion and ways of wickedness, this serves exceedingly to harden them, and establish in them an habitual contempt of sacred things. Such persons, above all men are like to be the most hardened and abandoned, and most difficultly reclaimed: as it was with the wicked Jews, who were much more confirmed in their wickedness, than those heathen cities of Tyre and Si-

don. To give that which is holy to those who are profane (or that we have no manner of reason from the circumstances of parentage and education to expect will be otherwise), is not the way to make them better, but worse: it is the way to have them habitually *trample* holy things *under their feet*, and increase in contempt of them, yea, even to *turn again and rend us*, and be more mischievous and hurtful enemies of that which is good, than otherwise they would be.

Objection XX.

Some *ministers* have been greatly *blessed* in the other way of proceeding, and some men have been *converted at the Lord's supper.*

Answer. Though we are to eye the providence of God, and not disregard his works, yet to interpret them to a sense, or apply them to a use inconsistent with the scope of the *word* of God, is a misconstruction and misapplication of them. God has not given us his *providence*, but his *word*, to be our governing rule. God is sovereign in his dispensations of providence; he bestowed the blessing on Jacob, even when he had a lie in his mouth; he was pleased to meet with Solomon, and make known himself to him, and bless him in an extraordinary manner, while he was worshipping in a *high place;* he met with Saul, when in a course of violent opposition to him, and out of the way of his duty to the highest degree, going to Damascus to persecute Christ; and even then bestowed the greatest blessing upon him, that perhaps ever was bestowed on a mere man. The conduct of divine Providence, with its reasons, is too little understood by us to be improved as our rule. "God has his way in the sea, his path in the mighty waters, and his footsteps are not known: and he gives none account of any of his matters." But God has given us his *word*, to this very end, that it might be our *rule;* and therefore has fitted it to be so; has so ordered it that it may be understood by us. And strictly speaking, this is our *only* rule. If we join any thing else to it, as making it our *rule*, we do that which we have no warrant for, yea, that which God himself has forbidden. See Deut. iv. 3, Prov. xxx. 6. And with regard to God's blessing and succeeding of ministers, have not some had remarkable experience of it in the way which I plead for, as well as some who have been for the way I oppose? However, we cannot conclude, that God sees nothing at all *amiss* in ministers, because he blesses them. In general he may see those things in them which are very right and excellent; these he approves and regards, while he overlooks and pardons their mistakes in opinion or practice, and notwithstanding these is pleased to crown their labors with his blessing.

As to the two last arguments in the *Appeal to the Learned*, concerning the subjects of the Christian sacraments, their being members of the *visible* church, and not the *invisible;* the force of those arguments depends entirely on the resolution of that question, Who are *visible saints?* Or what adult persons are regularly admitted to the privileges of members of the *visible church?* Which question has already been largely considered: and, I think, it has been demonstrated that they are those who exhibit a credible profession and visibility of *gospel holiness* or vital piety, and not merely of moral sincerity. So that there is no need of further debating the point in this place.

I might here mention many things not yet taken notice of, which some object as *incoveniences* attending the scheme I have maintained: and if men should set up their own wit and wisdom in opposition to God's revealed will, there is no end of the objections of this kind, which might be raised against any

of God's institutions. Some have found great fault even with the *creation* of the world, as being very inconveniently done, and have imagined that they could tell how it might be mended in a great many respects. But however God's altar may appear homely to us, yet if we lift up our tool upon it to mend it, we shall pollute it. Laws and institutions are given for the general good, and not to avoid every particular inconvenience. And however it may so happen, that sometimes inconveniences (real or imaginary) may attend the scheme I have maintained; yet, I think, they are in no measure equal to the manifest conveniences and happy tendencies of it, or to the palpable inconveniences and pernicious consequences of the other. I have already mentioned some things of this aspect, and would here briefly observe some others.

Thus, the way of making such a difference between outward duties of *morality* and *worship*, and those great inward duties of the *love of God* and *acceptance of Christ*, that the former must be *visible*, but that there need to be no *exhibition* nor *pretence* of the latter, in order to persons being admitted into the visible family of God; and that under a notion of the latter being *impossibilities*, but the other being *within men's power*; this, I think, has a direct tendency to confirm in men an *insensibility* of the heinousness of those *heart sins* of unbelief and enmity against God our Saviour, which are the source and sum of all wickedness; and tends to prevent their coming under a humbling *conviction* of the greatness and utter inexcusableness of these sins, which men must be brought to if ever they obtain salvation. Indeed it is a way that not only has this tendency, but has actually and apparently this effect, and that to a great degree.

The effect of this method of proceeding in the churches in New England, which have fallen into it, is actually this. There are some that are received into these churches under the notion of their being in the judgment of rational charity *visible saints* or *professing saints*, who yet at the same time are actually open *professors* of heinous *wickedness*; I mean the wickedness of living in known impenitence and unbelief, the wickedness of living in enmity against God, and in the rejection of Christ under the gospel: or, which is the same thing, they are such as freely and frequently acknowledge, that they do not profess to be as yet *born again*, but look on themselves as really *unconverted*, as having never unfeignedly accepted of Christ; and they do either explicitly or implicitly number themselves among those that *love not the Lord Jesus Christ*; of whom the apostle says, let such be *Anathema, Maranatha!* And accordingly it is known, all over the town where they live, that they make no pretensions to any *sanctifying grace* already obtained; nor of consequence are they commonly looked upon as any other than *unconverted* persons. Now, can this be judged the comely *order* of the gospel? Or shall God be supposed the *author* of such *confusion?*

In this way of church proceeding, God's own children and the true disciples of Christ are obliged to receive those as their *brethren*, admit them to the *communion of saints*, and embrace them in the highest acts of Christian society, even in their great *feast of love*, where they feed together on the body and blood of Christ, whom yet they have no reason to look upon otherwise than as *enemies of the cross of Christ*, and haters of their heavenly Father and dear Redeemer, they making no pretension to any thing at all inconsistent with those characters; yea, in many places, as I said before, freely professing this to be actually the case with them.

Christ often forbids the members of his church *judging one another:* but in this way of ecclesiastical proceeding, it is done continually, and looked upon as no hurt; a great part of those admitted into the church are by others of the

same communion judged *unconverted, graceless* persons; and it is impossible to avoid it, while we stretch not beyond the bounds of a *rational* charity.

This method of proceeding must inevitably have one of these two consequences: either there must be *no public notice* at all given of it, when so signal a work of grace is wrought, as a sinner's being brought to repent and turn to God, and hopefully becomes the subject of saving conversion; or else this notice must be given in the way of *conversation*, by the *persons themselves*, frequently, freely, and in all companies, declaring their own experiences. But surely, either of these consequences must be very unhappy. The former is so, viz., the forbidding and preventing any *public* notice being given on earth of the *repentance of a sinner*, an event so much to the honor of God, and so much taken notice of in *heaven*, causing *joy in the presence of the angels of God*, and tending so much to the advancement of religion in the world. For it is found by experience, that scarce any one thing has so great an influence to awaken sinners, and engage them to seek salvation, and to quicken and animate saints, as the tidings of a sinner's repentance, or hopeful conversion: God evidently makes use of it as an eminent means of advancing religion in a time of remarkable revival of religion. And to take a course effectually to prevent such an event's being notified on earth, appears to me a counteracting of God, in that which he ever makes use of as a chief means of the propagation of true piety, and which we have reason to think he will make use of as one principal means of the conversion of the world in the glorious latter day. But now as to the *other* way, the way of giving notice to the public of this event, by particular persons *themselves* publishing their own experiences from time to time and from place to place, on all occasions and before all companies, I must confess, this is a practice that appears to me attended with many inconveniences, yea, big with mischiefs. The abundant trial of this method lately made, and the large experience we have had of the evil consequences of it, is enough to put all sober and judicious people forever out of conceit of it. I shall not pretend to enumerate all the mischiefs attending it, which would be very tedious; but shall now only mention two things. One is, the bad effect it has upon the persons themselves that practise it, in the great tendency it has to spiritual *pride*; insensibly begetting and establishing an evil habit of mind in that respect, by the frequent return of the temptation, and this many times when they are not guarded against it, and have no time, by consideration and prayer, to fortify their minds. And then it has a very bad effect on the minds of *others* that hear their communication, and so on the state of religion in general, in this way. It being thus the custom for persons of all sorts, young and old, wise and unwise, superiors and inferiors, freely to tell their own experiences before all companies, it is commonly done very *injudiciously*, often very rashly and foolishly, out of season, and in circumstances tending to defeat any good end. Even sincere Christians too frequently in their conversation insist mainly on those things that are no part of their *true spiritual experience*; such as impressions on their fancy or imagination, suggestions of facts by passages of Scripture, &c.; in which case *children* and weak persons that hear, are apt to form their notions of religion and true piety by such experimental communications, and much more than they do by the most solid and judicious instructions out of the word they hear from the pulpit: which is found to be one of the devices whereby Satan has an inexpressible advantage to ruin the souls of men, and utterly to confound the interest of religion. This matter of making a public profession of godliness or piety of heart, is certainly a very important affair, and ought to be under some *public regulation*, and under the direction of *skilful guides*, and not left to the

management of every man, woman, and child, according to their humor or fancy: and when it is done, it should be done with great seriousness, preparation and prayer, as a solemn act of public respect and honor to God, in his house and in the presence of his people. Not that I condemn, but greatly approve of persons speaking sometimes of their religious experiences in private conversation, to proper persons and on proper occasions, with modesty and discretion, when the glory of God and the benefit or just satisfaction of others require it of them.

In a word, the practice of promiscuous admission, or that way of taking all into the church indifferently as *visible saints*, who are not either ignorant or scandalous, and at the same time that custom's taking place of persons' publishing their own *conversion* in common *conversation;* where these two things meet together, they unavoidably make *two* distinct kinds of *visible churches*, or different bodies of professing saints, one within another, openly distinguished one from another, as it were by a visible dividing line. One company consisting of those who are *visibly gracious* Christians, and open professors of godliness; another consisting of those who are *visibly moral* livers, and only profess common virtues, without pretending to any special and spiritual experiences in their hearts, and who therefore are not reputed to be converts. I may appeal to those acquainted with the state of the churches, whether this be not actually the case in some, where this method of proceeding has been long established. But I leave the judicious reader to make his own remarks on this case, and to determine, whether there be a just foundation in Scripture or reason for any such state of things; which to me, I confess, carries the face of glaring absurdity.

And now I commit this whole discourse (under God's blessing) to the reader's candid reflection and impartial judgment. I am sensible, it will be very difficult for many to be truly impartial in this affair; their prejudices being very great against the doctrine which I have maintained. And I believe, I myself am the person, who, above all others upon the face of the earth, have had most in my circumstances to prejudice me against this doctrine, and to make me unwilling to receive conviction of the truth of it. However, the clear evidence of God's mind in his word, as things appear to me, has constrained me to think and act as I have now done. I dare not go contrary to such texts as these, Lev. x. 10, Jer. xv. 19, Ezek. xxii. 26, and xliv. 6, 7, 8. And having been fully persuaded in my own mind, what is the Scripture rule in this matter, after a most careful, painful, and long search, I am willing, in the faithful prosecution of what appears to me of such importance and so plainly the mind and will of God, to resign to his providence, and leave the event in his hand.

It may not be improper to add here, as I have often had suggested to me, the probability of my being *answered* from the press: if any one shall see cause to undertake this, I have these reasonable requests to make to him, viz., that he would avoid the ungenerous and unmanly artifices used by too many polemid writers, while they *turn aside to vain jangling*, in *carping* at incidental passages, and displaying their wit upon some minute particulars, or less material things, in the author they oppose, with much *exclamation*, if possible to excite the ignorant and unwary reader's disrelish of the author, and to make him appear contemptible, and so to get the victory that way; perhaps dwelling upon and glorying in some pretended inconsistencies in some parts of the discourse, without ever entering thoroughly into the merits of the cause, or closely encountering any of the main arguments. If any one opposes me from the press, I desire he would attend to the true state of the question, and endeavor fairly to

take off the force of each argument, by answering the same directly, and distinctly, with calm and close reasoning; avoiding (as much as may be) both dogmatical assertion and passionate reflection. Sure I am, I shall not envy him the applause of a victory over me, however signal and complete, if only gained by superior light and convincing evidence. I would also request him to set his name to his performance, that I may in that respect stand on even ground with him before the world, in a debate wherein the public is to judge between us. This will be the more reasonable in case he should mingle any thing of accusation with his arguing: it was the manner even with the Heathen Romans, and reputed by them but just and equal, to *have accusers face to face.*

May the God of all grace and peace unite us more in judgment, affection, and practice, that with one heart, and one mouth, we may glorify his name through Jesus Christ. AMEN.

MISREPRESENTATIONS CORRECTED,

AND

TRUTH VINDICATED:

IN A REPLY TO THE REV. SOLOMON WILLIAMS'S BOOK, ENTITLED "THE TRUE STATE OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO LAWFUL COMMUNION IN THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS."

PREFACE.

SINCE I have been so repeatedly charged by Mr. Williams, with indecent and injurious treatment of Mr. Stoddard (whom doubtless I ought to treat with much respect), I may expect from what appears of Mr. Williams's disposition this way, to be charged with ill treatment of *him* too. I desire therefore that it may be justly considered by the reader, what is, and what is not, injurious or unhandsome treatment of an author in a controversy. And here I would crave leave to say that I humbly conceive, a distinction ought to be made between opposing and exposing a *cause*, or the *arguments* used to defend it, and reproaching *persons*. He is a weak writer indeed, who undertakes to confute an opinion, but dares not expose the nakedness and absurdity of it, nor the weakness or inconsistence of the methods taken and arguments used by any to maintain it, for fear he should be guilty of speaking evil of those things, and be charged with reproaching them. If an antagonist is angry at this, he thereby gives his readers too much occasion of suspicion towards himself, as chargeable with weakness, or bitterness.

I therefore now give notice, that I have taken full liberty in this respect; only endeavoring to avoid pointed and exaggerating expressions. If to set forth what I suppose to be the true absurdity of Mr. Williams's scheme, or any part of it, that it may be viewed justly in all its nakedness; withal observing the *weakness* of the defence he has made, not fearing to show wherein it is weak, and how the badness of his cause obliges him to be *inconsistent* with himself, inconsistent with his own professed principles in religion, and with things conceded and asserted by him in the book especially under consideration; and declaring particularly wherein I think his arguments fail, whether it be in *begging the question*, or being impertinent and *beside* the question, or arguing in effect against himself; also observing wherein Mr. Williams has made *misrepresentations* of words or things; I say, if to do these things be reproaching *him*, and injurious treatment of him, then I have injured him. But I think I should be foolish, if I were afraid to do that (and to do it as thoroughly as I can) *which must be the design* of my writing, if I write at all in opposition to his tenets, and to the defence he makes of them.

Indeed if I misrepresent what he says, in order to make it appear in the worst colors; altering his words to another sense, to make them appear more ridiculous; or adding other words, that carry the sense beyond the proper import of his words, to heighten the supposed absurdity, and give me greater advantage to exclaim; if I set myself to aggravate matters, and strain them beyond bounds, making mighty things of mere trifles; or if I use exclamations and invectives, instead of arguments; then Mr. Williams might have just cause to complain, and the reader would have just reason for disgust. But whether I have done so or not, must be judged by the reader; of whom I desire nothing more than the most impartial and exact consideration of the merits of the cause, and examination of the force and weight of every argument. I desire that no bitter reproachful invectives, no vehement exclamations, no supercilious assuming words and phrases may be taken for reasoning, on either side. If the reader thinks he finds any such in what I have written, I am willing he should set them aside as nothing worth; carefully distinguishing between them and the strength of the argument. I desire not, that the cause should be judged of by the skill which either Mr. Williams or I do manifest, in flinging one at another.

If in places where the argument pinches most, and there is the greatest appearance of strong reason, in Mr. Williams's book, I do (as some other disputants) instead of entering thoroughly into the matter, begin to flounce and fling, and go about to divert and drown the reader's attention to the argument, by the noise of big words, or ma-

gisterial and disdainful expressions; let the reader take it (as justly he may) for a shrewd sign of a consciousness of the weakness of my cause in that particular, or at least of a distrust of my own ability to defend myself well in the reader's apprehension, and to come off with a good grace any other way.

In this case, I shall not think it any injustice done me by the reader, though he suspects that I feel myself pressed, and begin to be in trouble, for fear I should not seem to come off like a champion, if I should trust to mere reasoning. I can uprightly say, I never have endeavored by such means to evade a proper consideration of any part of Mr. Williams's reasoning; nor have designedly contrived, in this or any other method, to free myself from the trouble of a just answer to any thing material in his book; and I have been especially careful to speak most particularly to the main parts of his scheme, and such of his reasonings, as I could suppose those of his readers who are on his side, would be most likely to have their chief dependence on, and to think most difficult to be answered.

With regard to my *method* in this reply, I judged it most convenient to reduce my remarks on Mr. Williams's principles, and the parts of his scheme, and kinds of arguing which repeatedly appear in various parts of his book, to their *proper heads*. I thought, this tended to give the reader a clearer and more comprehensive view of the whole controversy, and the nature of the arguments made use of; and that it also would make my work the shorter. For otherwise, I must have had the same things, or things of the same nature, to have observed often, as I found them repeated in different parts of his book, and the same remarks to make over and over again. And that the reader may not be without any advantages which he might have had in the other method, of keeping, in my reply, to the order in which things lie in the book replied to, following my author from one page and paragraph to another, I have therefore subjoined a *table*, by which the reader may readily turn to what is said on each particular, that is wont to be brought into this debate, on one side or the other.

With regard to my *citations* from Mr. Williams's book, I have never designedly altered his words: and where I have for brevity's sake referred to any sentiment of his, without citing the words at large, I have used care not to change or heighten the sense, or in any respect to vary from the just import of what he delivers. And that the reader may himself more easily and readily judge of the fairness of my citations and references, I have mentioned the *page*, and the *part* of the page, where the thing referred to is to be found: supposing each page to be divided into five equal parts, I have noted the several parts of the page by the letters *a. b. c. d. e.* So that when I have referred to the top of the page, or the first fifth part of it, I have mentioned the number of the page, and added the letter *a.* to the number: and if the *middle*, or third fifth part, then I have added the letter *c.* And so of the rest, as the reader will see. I have ever done thus, unless the thing referred to is to be found through the whole or great part of the page. I have also done the same very often, where I have occasion to cite other authors. Only when I have *before* quoted the same thing I am not always so exact and particular in noting the place again, in my *second* quotation or reference.*

* It was not thought necessary to insert these references, nor the table mentioned above in this work, as it is probable few readers will possess Mr. Williams's Book, or wish to attend so closely to the controversy.

MISREPRESENTATIONS CORRECTED,

AND

TRUTH VINDICATED.

PART I.

OBSERVING THE GENERAL MISREPRESENTATIONS MR. WILLIAMS MAKES CONCERNING THE BOOK HE WRITES AGAINST.

SECTION I.

Concerning the Design of my writing and publishing my Book, and the question debated in it.

Mr. Williams asserts it to be my professed and declared *design*, in writing the book, which he has undertaken an answer to, to oppose Mr. Stoddard. He has taken a great liberty in this matter. He charges me with a declared design of writing in opposition to Mr. Stoddard, no less than nine or ten times in his book. And he does not content himself with saying, there are passages in my preface, or elsewhere, whence this may be *inferred;* but he says expressly, that *I profess to be disputing* against Mr. Stoddard's *doctrine*, p. 14. That I *tell my readers, I am disputing against* Mr. Stoddard's *question*, p. 37 That I *tell them so in my preface*, p. 107. That I *often declare that I am opposing* Mr. Stoddard's *opinion*, p. 132. And on this foundation he charges me with "blotting a great deal of paper, disserving the cause of truth by changing the question, and putting it in such terms as Mr. Stoddard expressly disclaims, and then confuting it as Mr. Stoddard's principle; unfair treatment of Mr. Stoddard," p. 2. "Surprisingly going off from Mr. Stoddard's argument to cast an odium upon it, treating Mr. Stoddard and his doctrine in such a manner as to reproach him and his principles, tending to render them odious to the unthinking multitude, and telling a manifest untruth," p. 14, 15, &c. Whereas, I never once signified it to be the thing I aimed at, to oppose Mr. Stoddard, or appear as *his* antagonist. But the very reverse was true; and meddling with him, or what he had said, I studied to avoid, as much as the circumstances of the debate with my people would allow, who had been taught by him, and who so greatly and continually alleged against me the things which he had said. Nor is there any appearance in those passages Mr. Williams cites from my preface, as though this was the thing I sought or aimed at. Nay, one of those passages which he produces to prove it, shows the contrary; as it shows, that its being so (as I supposed) that what I wrote was not consistent with, but opposite to what Mr. Stoddard had maintained, was an unsought for and unpleasing circumstance of that publication. My words are, "'Tis far from a pleasing circumstance of this publication, that it is against what my honored grandfather strenuously maintained, both from the pulpit and the press." Certainly my *regretting* and *excusing* such an unavoidable circumstance was a thing exceeding diverse from giving notice to the world, that

the thing I aimed at was to set myself up as Mr. Stoddard's antagonist, and to write an answer to, and confute what he had written. It will, at first sight, be manifest to every impartial reader, that the design of my preface was not to state the subject and intention of the book; this is done professedly, and very particularly afterwards, in the first part of the essay itself. And if I might have common justice, surely I might be allowed to tell my own opinion, and declare my own design without being so confidently and frequently charged with *misrepresenting* my own thoughts and intentions.

The very *nature of the case* is such as must lead every impartial person to a conviction, that the design of my writing must be to defend myself, in that controversy, which I had with my people at Northampton; as it is notorious and publicly known, that *that controversy* was the occasion of my writing; and that therefore my business must be to defend that opinion or position of *mine* which I had declared to them, which had been the occasion of the controversy, and so the grand subject of debate between us; whether this were exactly agreeable to any words that might be found in Mr. Stoddard's writings on the subject, or not. Now this opinion or position was the same with that which I expressed in the first part of my book. In such terms I expressed myself to the committee of the church, when I first made that declaration of my opinion, which was the beginning of the controversy, and when writing in defence of my opinion was first proposed. And this was the point continually talked of in all conversation at Northampton, for more than two years, even until Mr. Williams's book came out. The controversy was, *Whether there was any need of making a credible profession of godliness, in order to persons being admitted to full communion; whether they must profess saving faith, or whether a profession of common faith were not sufficient; whether persons must be esteemed truly godly, and must be taken in under that notion, or whether if they appeared morally sincere, that were not sufficient?* And when my book came abroad, there was no objection made, that I had not truly expressed the subject of debate, in my stating the question. But the subject of debate afterwards, in parish meetings, church meetings, and in all conversation, was the question laid down in my book. No suggestion among them, that the profession persons made in Mr. Stoddard's way, was taken as a profession of *real* godliness, or gospel holiness; or that they were taken in *under a notion of their being truly pious persons*, as Mr. Williams would have it; no suggestion, that the dispute was only about the *degree of evidence*. But the dispute was, what was the thing to be made *evident;* whether *real godliness*, or *moral sincerity?* It was constantly insisted on, with the greatest vehemence, that it was not saving religion, which needed to be *professed*, or *pretended to;* but another thing, religion of a lower kind. The public *acts* of the church and parish from time to time, show, that the point in controversy was, *whether the professors of godliness only, ought to be admitted?* Public votes, of which I made a record, were several times passed to know the church's mind concerning the admission of *those who are able and willing to make a profession of godliness;* using these terms. And once it was passed, that, *such should not be admitted in the way of publicly making such a profession.* And at another time the vote passed, *that the admission of such persons in such a way* (described in the same words) *should not be referred to the judgment of certain neighboring ministers.* At another time, it was insisted on by the parish, in a parish meeting, that I should put a vote in the church, in these words, *Whether there be not a dispute between Mr. Edwards pastor of the church, and the church, respecting the question he hath argued in his book last*

published? And accordingly the vote was put and affirmed, in a church meeting, in the same terms. And this was the question I insisted on in my public lectures at Northampton, appointed for giving the reasons of my opinion. My doctrine was in these words, "It is the mind and will of God, that none should be admitted to full communion in the church of Christ, but such as in profession, and in the eye of a reasonable judgment, are truly saints, or godly persons." The town was full of objections against those sermons; but none, as ever I heard, objected, that my doctrine was *beside the controversy.* And this was all along the point of difference between me and the neighboring ministers. This was the grand subject of debate with them, at a meeting of ministers, appointed on purpose for conference on the subject. It was wholly concerning the *matter* of profession, or the *thing* to be exhibited and made evident or visible; and not about the *manner* of professing, and the *degree* of evidence. And this was the doctrine directly opposed by Mr. A—y, one of the neighboring ministers, whom my people had got as their champion to defend their cause in the pulpit at Northampton. Thus one of the corollaries he drew from his doctrine (as it was taken from his mouth in writing) was, That "a man may be a visible saint, and yet there be no sufficient grounds for our charity, that he is regenerate." Quite contrary to what Mr. Williams maintains. Another of his corollaries was in these words, "A minister or church may judge a man a saint, and upon good grounds, and not have grounds to judge him regenerate." He proposed this inquiry, "Do not such as join themselves to the church, covenant, not only to be visible saints, but saints in heart?" The answer was in the *negative;* quite contrary to Mr. Williams. Another was, "Does not a visible saint imply a visibility of grace, or an appearance of it?" The answer was, "Not always;" quite contrary to Mr. Williams. Another was, "Is it not hypocrisy in any man, to make a profession of religion, and join himself to the church, and not have grace?" The answer was in the *negative;* also quite contrary to Mr. Williams. But these sermons of Mr. A—y, were highly approved by the generality of the people of Northampton, as agreeable to their minds.

And the controversy, as I have stated it in my book, was the controversy in which the church and I appeared before the *council,* who determined our separation, when we each of us declared our sentiments before them. The point of difference was entirely the *matter* of profession, and the *thing* to be made *visible;* not the *degree* of evidence or *visibility.* No hint was given as though we both agreed, that true piety or gospel holiness was the thing to be made visible, and that such only should be received as are truly godly persons in the eye of the church's judgment (as Mr. Williams holds) and that we only differed about the proper grounds of such a judgment.

And therefore it is apparent, it was this controversy, and its consequences, that were the ground of my separation from my people; and not any thing like the controversy which Mr. Williams professes to manage in his answer. This controversy, when it came out in Mr. Williams's book, was new in Northampton, and entirely alien from all the dispute which had filled that part of the country, and a great part of New England, with noise and uproar, for about two years and a half. The thing which Mr. Williams over and over allows to be true, was the very same, both in effect and in terms, which the people had been most vehemently fighting against, from week to week, and from month to month, during all this time. And therefore the design of my writing led and obliged me to maintain that position or doctrine of mine, which was the occasion of this debate.

And, be it so, that I did suppose this position was contrary to Mr. Stoddard's opinion, and was opposed by him,* and therefore thought fit in my preface to excuse myself to the world for differing from him; did this oblige me, in all that I wrote for the maintaining my position, to keep myself strictly to the words which he had expressed *his question* in, and to regulate and limit my self in every argument I used, and objection I answered, by the terms which he made use of in proposing his opinion and arguments? And if I have not done it, do I therefore deserve to be charged before the world with *changing the question*, with *unfair treatment of Mr. Stoddard*, with *surprisingly going off from his argument*, with *disserving the cause of truth*, &c.?

It would have been no great condescension in Mr. Williams if he had allowed that I knew what the question was, which was disputed between me and my people, as well as he, in a distant part of the country: yea, if he had acknowledged, that I was as likely as he, to understand Mr. Stoddard's real sentiments and practice; since I was in the ministry two years with him, as co-pastor of the same church, and was united with him in ecclesiastical administrations, in admitting members, and in examining them as to their qualifications, and have stood for more than twenty-three years in a pastoral relation to his church, most intimately acquainted with the nature of its constitution, its sentiments and method of administration, and all its religious concerns, have myself been immediately concerned in the admission of more than three quarters of its present members, and have had the greatest occasion to look into their way of admission, and have been acquainted with every living member that Mr. Stoddard had admitted before my coming; and have been particularly informed, by many of them, of the manner of Mr. Stoddard's conduct in admitting them, their own apprehensions concerning the terms of their admission, and the profession they made in order to it; and also the sentiments of the whole of that large town, who were born and brought up under his ministry, concerning his constant doctrine and practice, relating to the admission of members, from their infancy. Whereas, Mr. Williams from his youth had lived in another part of the country, at seventy miles distance.

SECTION II.

Observing Mr. Williams's Misrepresentations of the principles and tenets, delivered in the book which he undertakes to answer.

Mr. Williams does very greatly misrepresent the opinion I am of, and the principles I maintain in my book, in many respects.

1. He says, p. 5, "The whole argument, and indeed the whole controversy, turns upon this single point, viz., What is that *evidence* which by divine appointment the church is to have, of the *saintship* of those who are admitted to the outward privileges of the covenant of grace? Mr. Edwards seems to suppose, this must be the *highest* evidence a man can give of sincerity; and I apprehend it to be the *lowest* evidence the nature of the thing will admit." But this is very strange, since I had particularly declared in my *stating of the question* (p. 5), that the evidence I insisted on, was *some outward manifestation, that ordinarily rendered the thing probable.* Which shows that all I insisted on, was only, that the evidence should amount to *probability.* And if the nature of the case will admit of some *lower* kind of evidence than this, or if

* Whether I was mistaken in this, will appear in the sequel.

there be any such thing as a sort of evidence that does not so much as amount to *probability*, then it is possible that I may have some controversy with him and others about the degree of evidence; otherwise it is hard to conceive, how he should contrive to make out a controversy with me.

But that the reader may better judge, whether Mr. Williams truly represents me as supposing that the evidence which should be insisted on, is *the highest evidence a man can give of sincerity*, I would here insert an extract of a letter which I wrote to the Rev. Peter Clark of Salem Village, a twelvemonth before Mr. Williams's book was published. The original is doubtless in Mr. Clark's hands. In that letter, I declared my sentiments in the following words: "It does not belong to the controversy between me and my people, how particular or large the profession should be that is required. I should not choose to be confined to exact limits as to that matter. But rather than contend, I should content myself with a few words, briefly expressing the cardinal virtues, or acts implied in a hearty compliance with the covenant of grace; the profession being made (as should appear by inquiry into the person's doctrinal knowledge) understandingly; if there were an external conversation agreeable thereto. Yea, I should think that such a person, solemnly making such a profession, had a right to be received as the object of a public charity, however he himself might scruple his own conversion, on account of his not remembering the time, not knowing the method of his conversion, or finding so much remaining sin, &c. And (if his own scruples did not hinder*) I should think a minister or church had no right to debar such a professor, though he should say, he did not think himself converted. For I call that a profession of godliness, which is a profession of the great things wherein godliness consists, and not a profession of his own opinion of his good estate."

Northampton, May 7, 1750.

In like manner I explained my opinion, very particularly and expressly, before the council that determined my separation from my people, and before the church, in a very public manner in the meeting-house, many people being present, near a year before Mr. Williams's book was published; and to make it the more sure, that what I maintained might be well observed, I afterwards sent the foregoing extract of my letter to Mr. Clark of Salem Village, into the council. And, as I was informed, it was particularly taken notice of in the council, and handed round among them, to be read by them.

The same council, having heard that I had made certain draughts of the covenant, or forms of a public profession of religion, which I stood ready to accept from the candidates for communion, they, for their further information, sent for them. Accordingly I sent them four distinct draughts or forms, which I had drawn up about a twelvemonth before (near two years before the publishing of Mr. Williams's book), as what I stood ready to accept (any one of them) rather than contend and break with my people. The two shortest of those forms were as follows.

One of them was,

"I hope, I do truly find a heart to give up myself wholly to God, according to the tenor of that covenant of grace which was sealed in my baptism, and to walk in a way of that obedience to all the commandments of God, which the covenant of grace requires, as long as I live."

* I added this, because I supposed that such persons as judge themselves unconverted, if of my principles, respecting qualifications for communion, would scruple coming, and could not come with a good conscience; but if they were of Mr. Stoddard's principle, viz., That unconverted men might lawfully come, neither a man's being of that opinion, nor his judging himself unconverted, would hinder my receiving him who exhibited proper evidence to the church of his being a convert.

The other,

"I hope, I truly find in my heart a willingness to comply with all the commandments of God, which require me to give up myself wholly to Him, and to serve Him with my body and my spirit; and do accordingly now promise to walk in a way of obedience to all the commandments of God, as long as I live."

Now the reader is left to judge, whether I insist, as Mr. Williams represents that persons must not be admitted without the *highest* evidence a man *can* give of sincerity.

II. Mr. Williams is abundant in suggesting and insinuating to his readers, that the opinion laid down in my book is, that persons ought not to be admitted to communion without an absolute and peremptory determination in those who admit them, that they are truly godly; because I suppose it to be necessary, that there should be a *positive* judgment in their favor.

Here I desire the reader to observe, that the word *positive* is used in two senses. (1.) Sometimes it is put in opposition to *doubtful*, or *uncertain*: and then it signifies the same as *certain*, *peremptory*, or *assured*. But, (2.) The word *positive* is very often used in a very different sense; not in opposition to *doubtful*, but in opposition to *negative*: and so understood, it signifies very much the same as *real*, or *actual*. Thus, we often speak of a *negative good*, and a *positive good*. A *negative good* is a mere negation or absence of *evil*. But a *positive good* is something more, it is some *real*, *actual good*, instead of evil. So there is a *negative charity*, and a *positive charity*. A *negative* charity is a mere absence of an ill judgment of a man, or forbearing to condemn him. Such a charity a man may have towards any stranger he transiently sees in the street, that he never saw or heard any thing of before. A *positive charity* is something further than merely not condemning, or not judging ill of a man; it implies a *good thought* of a man. The reader will easily see that the word *positive*, taken in this sense, is an exceeding different thing from *certain*, or *peremptory*. A man may have something more than a mere *negative* charity towards another, or a mere forbearing to condemn him, he may actually entertain some *good thought* of him, and yet there may be no proper *peremptoriness*, no pretence of any *certainty* in the case.

Now it is in this sense I use the phrase, *positive judgment*, viz., in opposition to a mere *negative charity*; as I very plainly express the matter, and particularly and fully explain myself in *stating the question*. In my *Inquiry* (p. 5) I have the following words: "By *Christian judgment*, I intend something further than a kind of mere *negative* charity, implying that we forbear to censure and condemn a man, because we do not know but that he may be godly, and therefore forbear to proceed on the foot of such a censure or judgment in our treatment of him; as we would kindly entertain a stranger, not knowing but, in so doing, we entertain an angel, or precious saint of God: but I mean a *positive judgment*, founded on some *positive* appearance or visibility, some outward manifestation that ordinarily renders the thing *probable*. There is a difference between suspending our judgment, or forbearing to condemn, or having some hope that possibly the thing may be so, and so hoping the best, and a *positive* judgment in favor of a person. For a having some hope, only implies, that a man is not in utter despair of a thing; though his prevailing opinion may be otherwise, or he may suspend his opinion."

Here, I think, my meaning is very plainly and carefully explained. However, inasmuch as the word *positive* is sometimes used for *peremptory* or *certain*, Mr. Williams catches at the term, and lays fast hold of the advantage he

thinks this gives him, and is abundant, all over his book, in representing as though I insisted on a *positive judgment* in this sense. So he applies the word, referring to my use of it, from time, to time. Thus, p. 69: "If there be any thing in this argument, I think it must be what I have observed, viz., that a Christian must make a *positive judgment* and determination, that another man is a saint, and this judgment must have for its ground something which he supposes is, at least ordinarily, a *certain* evidence of his saintship, and by which gracious sincerity is certainly distinguished from every thing else." And p. 141: "The notion of men's being able and fit to determine *positively* the condition of other men, or the *certainty* of their gracious state, has a direct tendency to deceive the souls of men." And thus Mr. Williams makes mention of a *positive judgment* above forty times in his book, with reference to my use of it, and to my declared opinion of the necessity of it; and everywhere plainly uses the phrase in that sense, for *absolute* and *peremptory*, in opposition to *doubtfulness;* continually insinuating, that this is what I professedly insist on. Whereas, every *act* of the judgment whatsoever, is a positive judgment in the sense in which I have fully declared I use it, viz., in opposition to *negative;* which is no *act*, but a mere withholding of the act of the judgment, or forbearing any actual judgment.* Mr. Williams himself does abundantly suppose, that there must be a *positive* judgment in *this* sense: he grants the very thing, though he rejects the term: for he holds, there must be such a "visibility as makes persons to appear to be real saints," p. 5.—He allows, that "the moral image of God or Christ must appear or be supposed to be in them, as the ground and reason of our charity; and that there must be some apprehension, some judgment of mind, of the saintship of persons, for its foundation, p. 68, and 69, and 71.—That they "must have such a character appearing in them," p. 55.—That there must be a judgment founded on "moral Evidence of gospel holiness," p. 139.

III. Mr. Williams to make my scheme appear the more ridiculous, does more than once represent it as my opinion, that in order to persons being admitted into the church, there must be a judgment of their being regenerate, founded on such a degree of evidence, as that it shall not be liable to be mistaken more than once in ten times. Thus, p. 63: "Mr Edwards himself supposes, in his own scheme, when he has made a positive judgment that every one singly whom he admits into the church is regenerate; yet, when taken collectively, it is probable *one in ten* will be a hypocrite!" So, p. 71: "If any thing be intended to the purpose for which this argument is brought, I conceive it must mean, that there must be such a *positive judgment* of the real holiness of persons, as is *not mistaken more than once in ten* times."

* Mr. John Glas, in his *Observes upon the original Constitution of the Christian Church* (p. 55, 56), says as follows. "You seem to have a great prejudice at what you call *positive evidences*, and judging upon them in the admission of church members. And I am at some loss to understand what you mean by them, though I have heard the expression frequently, among people of your opinion, used to express some very ill thing. If you mean by *positive evidences*, infallible evidences of a thing that none but God infallibly knows, and can assure a man's own conscience of, with respect to a man himself; I think it would be a very great evil for a man to require such evidence to found his judgment of charity, concerning another man's faith and holiness, or concerning his being an object of *brotherly love*. And I think, he is bound by the law of Christ to form his judgment in this matter upon less evidence. But if you mean *positive evidence* in opposition to *negative*, which is no evidence, I must own, I know not how to form a judgment of charity without some *positive* evidence. And is not a *credible profession* something *positive?* Is not a credible profession of the faith, love, and hope that is in Christ, or of Christianity, a *positive evidence* of a man's being an object of *brotherly love*, which evidence ought to be the ground of my *judgment of charity* concerning him, that he is a Christian, a believer in Christ, a brother for whom Christ died? If it be otherwise, and if there be no evidence upon which I can charitably judge, that a man is a brother for whom Christ died, then tell me, how I can evidence my love to Jesus Christ, in the labor of love towards my brother, whom I have seen and my love to God, in my love to them that are begotten of him."

Now I desire the reader to observe what is the whole ground, on which he makes such a representation. In explaining my opinion, in the beginning of my inquiry (p. 6), I desired it might be observed, that I did not suppose we ought to expect any such degree of *certainty* of the godliness of those who are admitted into the church, as that when the whole number admitted are taken collectively, or considered in the gross, we should have any reason to suppose every one to be truly godly; though we might have charity for each one that was admitted, taken *singly*, and by himself. And to show, that such a thing was possible, I endeavored to illustrate it by a comparison, or supposed case of probability *of ten to one* in the example of certain stones, with such probable marks of a *diamond*, as by experience had been found not to fail more than *once in ten times*. In which case, if a particular stone were found with those marks, there would be a probability of *ten to one*, with respect to that stone, singly taken, that it was genuine: but if ten such were taken together, there would not be the same probability that every one of them was so; but in this case, it is as likely as not, that some one in the ten is spurious. Now it is so apparent, that this particular degree of probability of *ten to one* is mentioned only as a *supposed case*, for illustration, and because, in a particular example, some number or other must be mentioned, that it would have been an affront to the sense of my readers to have added any caution, that he should not understand me otherwise. However, Mr. Williams has laid hold on this, as a good handle by which he might exhibit my scheme to the world in a ridiculous light; as though I had declared it my real opinion, that there must be the probability, of just *ten to one*, of true godliness, in order to persons' admission into the church. He might with as much appearance of sense and justice, have asserted concerning all the supposed cases in books of arithmetic, that the authors intend these cases should be understood as real *facts*, and that they have written their books, with all the sums and numbers in them, as books of *history*; and if any cases mentioned there only as examples of the several rules, are unlikely to be true accounts of fact, therefore have charged the authors with writing a *false* and *absurd* history.

IV. Another thing, yet further from what is honorable in Mr. Williams is this; that whereas I said as above, that there ought to be a prevailing opinion concerning those that are admitted, *taken singly, or by themselves*, that they are truly godly or gracious, though when we look on the whole number in the gross, we are far from determining that every one is a true saint, and that not one of the judgments we have passed, has been mistaken; Mr. Williams, because I used the phrase *singly taken*, has laid hold on the expression, and from thence has taken occasion to insinuate to his readers, as if my scheme were so very extravagant, that according to this, when a great multitude are admitted, their admitters must be confident of EVERY ONE's being *regenerated*. Hence he observes (p. 98): "There is no appearance, that John made a positive judgment that *every one* of these people were regenerated." Plainly using the expression as a very strong one; leading the reader to suppose, I insist the evidence shall be so clear, that when such a vast multitude as John baptized are viewed, the admitter should be peremptory in it, that his judgment has not failed so much as in a *single* instance; the very *reverse* of what I had expressed. In like manner, Mr. Williams treats the matter from time to time. As in p. 55: "The thing to be proved from hence is, that the apostles and primitive Christians, not only thought that these persons were Christians, by reason of their external calling, and professed compliance with the call; but had formed a positive judgment concerning EVERY ONE OF THEM

SINGLY, that they were real saints." Here the expression is plainly used as a very strong one; as implying much more than esteeming so great a multitude, when taken in the gross, to be generally true saints, and with a manifest design to carry the same idea in the mind of the reader as was before mentioned. See another like instance, p. 62.

V. However, my opinion is not represented bad enough yet; but to make it appear still worse, Mr. Williams is bold to strain his representation of it to that height, as to suggest that what I insist on, is a *certainty* of others' regeneration: though this be so diverse from what I had largely explained in stating the question, and plainly expressed in other parts of my book,* and also inconsistent with his own representations in other places. For if what I insist on be a probability that *may fail once in ten times*, as he says it is, p. 63, then it is not a *certainty* that I insist on; as he suggests, p. 141. Speaking of the evil consequences of my opinion, he says, "the notion of men's being able and fit to determine positively the condition of other men, or the certainty of their gracious estate, has a direct tendency to deceive the souls of men." So again in p. 69. And he suggests, that I require more than *moral evidence*, in p. 6, and p. 139.

VI. Mr. Williams represents me as insisting on some way of judging the state of such as are admitted to communion, *by their inward and spiritual experiences*, diverse from judging *by their profession and behavior*. So p. 7: "If their outward profession and behavior be the ground of this judgment, then it is the inward experience of the heart." P. 55, "Which judgment must be founded on something beyond and beside their external calling, and *visible profession* to comply with it, and to be separated for God: and therefore this judgment must be founded, either upon revelation, or a personal acquaintance with *their experiences*," &c. In like manner he is abundant, from one end of his book to the other, in representing as though I insisted on judging of men by *their inward and spiritual experiences*, in some peculiar manner. Which is something surprising, since there is not so much as a word said about *relating, or giving an account of experiences*, or what is commonly so called, as a term of communion. Mr. Williams (p. 6) pretends to quote two passages of mine, as an evidence, that this is what I insist on One is from the 5th page of my book. It is true I there say thus: "It is a visibility to the eye of the public charity, and not a private judgment, that gives a person a right to be received as a visible saint by the public." And I there say, "a public and serious profession of the great and the main things wherein the essence of true religion or godliness consists, together with an honest character, an agreeable conversation, and good understanding of the doctrines of Christianity, and particularly those doctrines that teach the grand condition of salvation, and the nature of true saving religion; this justly recommends persons to the good opinion of the public; whatever suspicions and fears any particular person, either the minister, or some other, may entertain, from what he in particular has observed; perhaps the manner of his expressing himself in giving an account of his experiences, or an obscurity in the order and method of his experiences, &c." But the words do not imply, it may be demanded of the candidate, that he should give an account of his experiences to the minister or any body else, as the term of his admission into the church; nor had I respect to any such thing. But I knew it was the

* In stating the question, p. 5, I explained the requisite visibility, to be *some outward manifestation, that ordinarily renders the thing probable*. To the like purpose, is what I say in p. 11, and p. 12. And in p. 106, I say expressly, "Not a *certainty*, but a profession and visibility of these things, must be the rule of the church's proceeding."

manner in many places for those who hoped they were godly persons, to converse with their neighbors, and especially with their minister, about their experiences; whether it was required of them in order to their coming into the church, or no; and particularly, I was sensible, that this was the manner at Northampton, for whose sake especially I wrote; and I supposed it the way of many ministers, and people, to judge of others' state, openly and publicly, by the order and method of their experiences, or the manner of their relating them. But this I condemn in the very passage that Mr. Williams quotes; and very much condemn, in other writings of mine which have been published; and have ever loudly condemned, and borne my testimony against.

There is one passage more, which Mr. Williams adds to the preceding, and fathers on me, to prove that I require *an account of experiences* in order to admission; pretending to rehearse my words, with marks of quotation, saying as follows, p. 6, and as he further explains himself, elsewhere; "the proper visibility which the public is to have of a man's being a saint, must be on some account of his experience of those doctrines which teach the nature of true saving religion." I have made long and diligent search for such a passage in my writings, but cannot find it. Mr. Williams says, "I thus explain myself elsewhere" but I wish he had mentioned in what place.

If there be such a sentence in some of my writings (as I suppose there is not), it will serve little to Mr. Williams's purpose. If we take the word experience according to the common acceptation of it in the English language, viz. a person's perceiving or knowing any thing by trial or experiment, or by immediate sensation or consciousness within himself: in this sense, I own, it may from what I say in my book be inferred, that a man's profession of his experience should be required as a term of communion. And so it may be as justly and as plainly inferred, that Mr. Williams himself insists on a profession of experience as a term of communion; experience of *a deep conviction of a man's undone state without Christ:* experience of a *persuasion of his judgment and conscience, that there is no other way of salvation;* experience of *unfeigned desires to be brought to the terms of the covenant.* For such things as these, he says, must be professed. So p. 75, and in innumerable other places. There is no such thing possible as a man's professing any thing within himself or belonging to his own mind, either good or bad, either common or saving, unless it be something that he *finds*, or (which is the same thing) *experiences*, within himself.

I know the word *experience* is used by many in a sort of peculiar sense, for the particular order and method of what passes within the mind and heart in conversion. And in this sense, Mr. Williams knows I disclaim the notion of making *experiences* a term of communion. I say he knows it, because (in p. 6) he quotes and rehearses the very words wherein I do expressly disclaim it And I am very large and particular in testifying against it in my book on *Religious Affections:* a book I have good reason to think Mr. Williams has seen and read, having been thus informed by a man of his own principles, that had it from his mouth. There, in p. 300 and 301, I say as follows: "In order to persons' making a proper profession of Christianity, such as the Scripture directs to, and such as the followers of Christ should require in order to the acceptance of the professors with full charity, as of their society, it is not necessary they should give an account of the particular *steps* and *method*, by which the Holy Spirit, sensibly to them, wrought and brought about those great essential things of Christianity in their hearts. There is no footstep in the Scripture of any such way of the apostles, or primitive ministers and Christians requiring any such relation in

order to their receiving and treating others as their Christian brethren, to all intents and purposes; or of their first examining them concerning the particular method and order of their *experiences*. They required of them a profession of the things wrought; but no account of the manner of working was required of them. Nor is there the least shadow in the Scripture of any such custom in the church of God, from Adam to the death of the Apostle John." To the same purpose again I express myself in p. 302, and in the preface to the book that Mr. Williams writes against, I make particular mention of this book *on Religious Affections*, wherein these things are said; and there declare expressly, that when I wrote that book, I was of the same mind concerning the qualifications of communicants that I am of now. But,

VII. To make my scheme still more obnoxious and odious, Mr. Williams once and again insinuates, that I insist on an account of such inward FEELINGS, as are by men supposed to be the certain discriminating marks of grace (so p. 7, and 141), though I never once used the phrase anywhere in my book. I said not a word about *inward feelings*, from one end of it to the other: nor is any *inward feeling* at all more implied in my scheme, than in his. But however, Mr. Williams knew that these phrases, *experiences* and *inward feelings*, were become odious of late to a great part of the country; and especially the latter of them, since Mr. Whitefield used it so much. And he well knew, that to tack these phrases to my scheme, and to suggest to his readers that these were the things I professed to insist on, would tend to render me and my scheme contemptible. If he says, though I use not that phrase, yet the things I insist on, are such as are *inwardly felt;* such as saving repentance, faith, &c.; I answer, these things are no more *inward feelings*, than the things he himself insists on; such as a *deep conviction* of a man's undone state, *unfeigned fervent desires* after Christ, a *fixed resolution* for Christ, *engagedness* for heaven, &c.

VIII. Mr. Williams abundantly, in almost all parts of his book, represents my principles to be such as suppose *men* to be the SEARCHERS *of others' hearts*. For which I have given no other ground, than only supposing that some such qualifications are necessary in order to communion, which have their seat in the *heart*, and so not to be intuitively seen by others; and that such qualifications must by profession and practice, be made so visible or credible to others, that others may rationally judge they are there. And Mr. Williams supposes the same thing as much as I. In p. 111, he expressly speaks of the qualifications necessary to communion, as being *in the heart*, and not possible to be known any other way than by their being seen there: and also often allows, that these qualifications must be exhibited, and made *visible*, by a credible profession, and answerable practice. Yea, he goes further, he even supposes that those who admit them to sacraments, ought to be *satisfied* by their profession, that they *really have these qualifications*. Thus he says, p. 54, "The baptizer *ought to be satisfied* by a person's profession, that he really believes the gospel, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour."

IX. Mr. Williams is not contented with all these representations of my scheme, but will have it appear more absurd and monstrous still; and therefore represents me as maintaining, that it is not the *visible profession of experiences*, that I suppose the ground of the church's judgment; but these *experiences and inward feelings themselves*, by having *the heart turned inside out*, and viewing them immediately *in the heart itself*, and *judging upon the next and immediate actings of the heart*. Here, I only desire the reader to read down Mr. Williams's 7th page, and make his own reflections.

X. Whereas in p. 16, of my book, I observed it to be the opinion of some,

that, " Although the members of the visible church are saints in profession and visibility, and in the acceptance of others, yet this is not with reference to saving holiness, but to quite another sort of saintship, viz., *moral sincerity ;* and that this is the *real saintship, discipleship,* and *godliness,* that is professed and visible in them," &c. Mr. Williams, p. 4, 5, says, " He does not remember that he ever heard of this, or that any body thought of it, before he saw it in my book ; and represents it as a poor man of straw, of my own framing : and he insists upon it, that it is allowed on all hands, that the visibility must be with *reference to saving holiness.*

I will not say, that Mr. Williams knew it to be a false representation which he here makes : but this I will say, that he ought to have been better informed, before he had thus publicly ridiculed this as a fiction of mine ; especially considering the opportunities and advantages he has had to know otherwise : this being the notion that had been (as was before observed) so loudly and publicly insisted on, for more than two years, by the people of Northampton, and by the neighboring ministers, and those of them that were Mr. Williams's near relatives ; as he has had abundant opportunities to be fully informed, having withal had great inducements to inquire. Besides, that this has been the universal opinion of all that part of the country (who thought themselves Mr. Stoddard's followers) for more than twenty years, is a fact as notorious, as that the people there generally believe Mr. Stoddard's doctrine of the necessity of a work of conversion, in order to get to heaven. And this is the opinion professedly maintained in a pamphlet published in Boston (anno 1741), entitled, *A right to the Lord's supper considered :* a piece which has long been well known among Mr. Williams's nearest relatives, and in good repute with them ; as I have had occasion to observe. This pamphlet insists expressly and abundantly, that *moral sincerity* is the REAL *discipleship* and *holiness,* with respect to which visible Christians are called *disciples* and *saints,* in Scripture. Particularly see pages 9, 10, 13, and 14. And which is more strange yet, Mr. Blake, the great author Mr. Williams makes so much use of, and in a book which I know he has long been the possessor of, speaks much of a profession of religion that has respect only to a *dogmatical, historical faith,* a *common faith,* a *faith true indeed* (as he says) *in its kind, but short of that which is justifying and saving,* and a *profession which goes no further,* as that which entitles to sealing ordinances. Thus he does expressly. See Blake on the Covenant, p. 241, 244, 245. The same author again and again distinguishes between *justifying faith,* and *faith of profession ;* as in p. 284, 285. 286. And which is more than all this, Mr. Williams (as will appear in the sequel) abundantly contends for the same thing himself, though against himself, and although he charges me in p. 35, with a great misrepresentation, in supposing that according to the scheme of my opposers, the profession required in those that are admitted, does not imply a pretence to *any thing more than moral sincerity and common grace*

PART II.

AN EXAMINATION OF MR WILLIAMS'S SCHEME, IN THE VARIOUS PARTS OF IT.

SECTION I.

Mr. Williams's Concessions.

MR. WILLIAMS allows, that, in order to a man's coming to sacraments, "he ought solemnly to profess and declare, that he is really and heartily convinced of the divine truth of the gospel, p. 30, 36, 32, 84. That he does sincerely, and with all his heart believe the gospel,* p. 49. And that they which admit him, ought to be satisfied he really believes the gospel, that Jesus is the son of God, the Saviour, p. 54. That he should profess and declare he believes in Christ, and that the gospel is indeed the revelation of God," p. 5. He allows, that "none ought to be admitted, but such as openly profess and declare an hearty consent to the covenant of grace, and compliance with the call of the gospel, and submission to the proposals of it, and satisfaction with that device for our salvation that is revealed in the gospel, and with the offer which God makes of himself to be our God in Christ Jesus,† and that they fall in with the terms of salvation proposed in the gospel, and renounce all other ways," p. 5, 8, 9, 11, 18, 55, 32. He plainly supposes it "not to be lawful for them that are lukewarm in religion, or those that serve two masters, to come to sacraments," p. 32, 35, 36. He supposes, that there must be "a real determination of a man's judgment and affection for the word of God," p. 53. That there ought to be a profession of subjection to Christ with all the heart, p. 10, and of a devotedness to the service of God, p. 49, and a professed giving up themselves to Christ, to be taught, ruled, and led by him in the Gospel way to salvation, p. 31, 32. And that communicants ought to "declare, that they do, with all their hearts, cast themselves upon the mercy of God, to help them to keep covenant," p. 125. That "they ought to profess a proper respect to Christ in their hearts, as well as a true notion of Him in their heads," p. 31. That they must make a profession that "imports a pretence of real friendship to Christ, and love to God above the world," p. 36. That "none ought to he admitted but visible saints, and that this visibility must be such as to a judgment of rational charity makes them appear as real saints, wise virgins, and endowed with gospel holiness," p. 5, 41, 42, 139, 14. That "there should be a charitable presumption, that the Spirit of God has taken hold of them, and turned their hearts to God," p. 52. That "they should be such persons as are in the eye of a Christain judgment truly gracious persons, supposed and believed in charity to be those to whom God has given saving repentance, and a heart-purifying faith," p. 65, and 47. "Such as have the moral image of Christ appearing in them, or supposed to be in them, and are to be loved on that account," p. 68. "He allows that there ought to be some apprehension, some judgment of the mind, that they

* When I first proposed to a certain candidate for communion at Northampton, the publicly making this profession, viz., *that he believed the truth of the gospel with all his heart*, many of the people cried out, that I insisted on what no saint on earth could profess, and that this amounted to a profession of absolute perfection. Hence many reports spread about the country, that I insisted on perfection as a term of communion.

† Mr. Williams cites Mr. Guthrie (preface p. 4) as on his side, when he speaks of such a profession, as that which is to be made.

Christians and saints, and have the moral image of God in them,"* p. 68 69, and 71. He allows, that "they must be taken into the church under a notion of being godly, and with respect to such a character appearing on them and very often insists, that "they themselves must make such a pretence," p. 55,† 132, 136, 143. So he allows, that they must not only be endowed with Christian piety in appearance; but that they must be so in profession, p. 3, 41, 44. "That they make a show of being wise virgins by the nature and purport of their profession," p. 42. And he insists with great strenuousness, over and over, upon its being their scheme, "that they ought to make a profession of real saintship," p. 132. Yea, he holds, that there must be not only some visibility and profession of real piety, but *moral evidence of it*, p. 139. He often uses notes of distinction, distinguishing between *moral sincerity*, and *real piety*, and insists much upon it as belonging to their scheme; that there must be a visibility of the latter, as thus distinguished from the former. So, he rejects with great contempt any suggestion of its being the scheme of my opposers, that *moral sincerity* is that saintship, which is to be professed and made visible; and in distinction from this, he asserts, that it is *real holiness*, p. 4, and 5. And again, p. 35, he uses a note of distinction, and insists that the opposers of my opinion hold, that communicants "must make a profession of something MORE than common grace and moral sincerity." And again, p. 139, he uses notes of distinction or discrimination, and says, that "they must exhibit a credible profession of gospel holiness, and NOT MERELY of moral sincerity; and says, it is NOT the visibility of moral sincerity, BUT the moral evidence of gospel sincerity, which God's word makes the rule of judging." And as he holds, that communicants must profess gospel holiness, so he seems to suppose that these professors must judge this of themselves; several things he says, seem plainly to imply it. This appears evidently implied in that interrogation put by Mr Williams, p. 35, "Mr. Stoddard rightly supposes all visible saints who are not truly pious, to be hypocrites; and the Scripture supposes and calls them so too: but will it therefore follow, that all hypocrites know they are so?" And he in effect

* By this it appears, when Mr. W. speaks of the church's *rational judgment that persons have real holiness*, and the like, he does not mean merely a treating them as such, in public administrations, and external conduct: for here he speaks not of the external conduct, but of *the apprehension of the understanding, and judgment of the mind*; and this as the foundation of the affection of the heart.

† Mr. Williams's words (p. 55) are pretty remarkable: "The reader (says he) will judge, whether the manner of Mr. Edwards's treating the question, and representing the opinion of Mr. Stoddard and others, in the words I have quoted above, be not *unaccountable*; though this is neither the first nor the last time of this treating the matter in such a manner. As if Mr. Stoddard and his adherents supposed persons were to be admitted without any notion of their being godly, or any respect to such a character appearing on them; and that they themselves are without such a pretence." Whereas, Mr. Stoddard expressly maintains, that men may be *duly qualified* and *fit matter* for church membership, without saving grace. (Appeal, p. 15, 16.) And that they *may* and *ought to come, though they know themselves to be in a natural condition*. (Doc. of Instituted Churches, p 21. See also his Sermon on the subject, p. 13.) And according to Mr. Stoddard, communicants are not so much as *supposed* godly persons. This (Appeal, p. 43) he says expressly, That, *by the institution, communicants at the Lord's Supper are not supposed to be real saints*. And also asserts (Appeal, p. 76), That we are not obliged to *believe* visible saints to be real saints. And it seems by what he says in his Appeal (p. 17), The church may admit persons to communion, when at the same time *they are aware that they are hypocrites*. For there, in answer to Dr. Mather, who had cited certain texts to prove, that when hypocrites do come into the church, they come in *unawares*; he says, *But neither of the places he cites proves that* all *hypocrites come in unawares*. And in the next page he says, *The discovery of men's hypocrisy is not the reason of their being cast out*. Still evidently on the same foundation, that some known hypocrites are *fit* to be admitted; for he says (p. 15), *Such as, being admitted, may not be cast out, are fit to be admitted*. And these things are agreeable to what I know Mr. Stoddard's church and congregation have universally supposed to be his constant doctrine and practice among them. Thus it was, without one dissenting voice among them, during the twenty-four years that I lived with them. And now the reader is desired to judge, as Mr. W. would have him, whether my representing it to be the opinion of Mr. S. and his adherents, that persons might *be admitted into the church without any notion of their being godly, or any respect to such a character appearing on them*, be unaccountable. By these things it is evident, Mr. Stoddard's scheme was far from being what Mr. Williams represents it to be, and pretends to maintain as his. And if the question he had to controvert with me were Mr. Stoddard's question, as he asserts, yet he greatly mistakes *the true state of the question*, though that be given as the title of his book.

asserts, "that men should look at such a qualification, as sanctifying grace, in themselves, and inquire whether they have it, or no, in order to determine whether they should present themselves to gospel ordinances." For he greatly finds fault with one for suggesting, as if those of a different opinion from me supposed, that persons have no manner of need to look at any such qualification in themselves, or at all inquire whether they have it, in order to present themselves to sacraments. He refers to that passage in my book, p. 55, "I cannot conceive what should move Philip to utter those words, or what he should aim at in them, if he at the same time supposed that the Eunuch had no manner of need to look at any such qualification in himself, or at all to inquire whether he had such a faith, or no, in order to determine whether he MIGHT present himself as the subject of baptism." It is plain the qualification I have respect to, is *grace* or *saving faith*. And so Mr. Williams himself understands me; as appears by his reflections, p. 49; where, after quoting this passage, he consigns me over to another judgment, for suggesting that my opposers hold what I had there expressed, and for "representing the matter, as if they looked on it as no matter whether a person coming to gospel ordinances had any GRACE or no, and that he had no manner of need to inquire any thing about his sincerity."*

SECTION II.

Some of the plain consequences of the foregoing concessions of Mr. Williams.

1. If it be as Mr. Williams says, that "the church ought to admit none to their holy communion, in special ordinances, but visible saints, and that this visibility must be such as, to a judgment of rational charity, makes them appear as real saints, and those that are admitted must be such as profess real saintship, gospel holiness, in distinction from moral sincerity;" then the whole of my first argument, from the nature of a *visibility* and *profession* of Christianity, is allowed by him, in both *premises* and *consequence*. And indeed Mr. Williams does this not only consequentially, but he is express in it. In p. 4, taking notice of this argument, he says, "The sense and force of it wholly lies in this compass; A *visible saint* is one that to the view, appearance, and judgment of the church, is a *real saint*; and since none but *visible saints* are to be admitted by the church, therefore none are to be admitted but such as *appear* to the view and judgment of the church to be real saints." But these things, which Mr. Williams himself allows as the sum of the argument, both premises and consequence, are expressly allowed by him in what there follows.

2. If there must be a visibility and profession of real piety in distinction from moral sincerity, to that it can be truly said, as Mr. Williams says with discretive terms, and notes of *discrimination*, that "NOT MERELY the one must be professed, BUT the other; and that MORE than moral sincerity must be professed," &c. Then it follows (or rather it is the same thing) that men must profess religion with some *discrimination* or marks of difference in their words, distinguishing what is professed from moral sincerity; contrary to what Mr. Williams strenuously and frequently asserts (p. 6, 9, and many other places). For if the

* Now let all who have been acquainted with the controversy between me and my people at Northampton, consider these things, which Mr. Williams earnestly insists do belong to his scheme; and judge whether they be agreeable to the scheme which my opposers there have so vehemently and long contended for; yea, whether they are not very opposite to it; or whether in these things Mr. Williams has not entirely yielded up, yea, vehemently asserted the chief things concerning which they contested with me; and so, whether he has at all helped their cause by writing his book or rather, on the contrary has fought against them.

profession is made in words that signify no *difference*, then nothing *different* is signified or professed by those words; and so nothing MORE; contrary also to what Mr. Williams also asserts.

3. If it be as Mr. Williams says, that "the Scripture has determined none ought to be admitted but such as make an open profession and declaration of a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, such as covenant with God with their whole hearts, and profess gospel holiness:" then the whole of my second argument, concerning *explicit covenanting with God*, is expressly allowed, in both *premises* and *consequence;* though Mr. Williams seems at the same time with so much labor and earnestness, to militate against it. For the *premises are*, that *all ought openly and explicitly to own God's covenant, or consent to the terms of it.* This is the same thing that he asserts as above. And the *consequence*, or thing which I inferred from it, was, that all that are admitted ought to make a profession of real godliness. And this also he expressly and often allows.

4. Since it is supposed, that in order to admission, men *ought to profess real friendship to Christ, love to him above the world, and to profess a proper respect to Christ in their hearts, as well as a true notion of him in their heads;* and that *they ought to profess gospel holiness, and not merely moral sincerity*: therefore the whole of what belongs to my third argument, is allowed, both *premises* and *consequence.* The *premises* were, that the *nature of things affords as much reason for professing a proper respect to Christ in the heart, as a true notion of him in the head.* This he allows. What I endeavor to infer from hence, was, that *therefore men ought to professs true piety, and not moral sincerity only.* And this is also allowed by him.

5. It appears that the whole of my fourth argument, both *premises* and *consequence*, is allowed. The *premises* were, that *the Scripture reckons all visible saints who are not truly pious, to be hypocrites.* This Mr. Williams expressly allows, p. 25. The *consequence* I inferred, was, that visible saints are such as make a profession of true godliness, and not moral sincerity only. This also is very fully allowed by him, p. 139.

6. Since it is supposed, that when Christ's rules are attended, they that come to sacraments, *do not know themselves to be hypocrites, but must look at such a qualification in themselves, as grace, and make such a pretence and profess gospel holiness:* therefore all is in effect allowed, that I endeavored from the latter part of the 7th chapter of Matthew, which was to show that professing Christians in general, all those that said *Lord, Lord*, both those that built on the *sand*, and those that built on a *rock*, were such as imagined themselves to have a saving interest in Christ, and *pretended* to be his real disciples, and made such a profession. The same was what I endeavored to show from the parable of the ten Virgins. And therefore all that I argued from thence is in like manner allowed.

7. Hence in vain is all the opposition Mr. Williams makes to what I allege from the Acts of the Apostles, from chap. ii. from the story of the *Eunuch*, and other parts of that book, concerning the manner and circumstances of the admission of members into the primitive Christian church, and the profession they made; seeing he grants the main point I endeavored to prove by it, viz., that they *did make*, and all adult persons that are admitted into the church, *must make* a profession of *something* MORE *than moral sincerity, even gospel holiness*

8. Hence, in vain is all he says in opposition to my eighth argument, taken from the manner of the apostles treating and addressing the primitive churches in their epistles; since he does either expressly or virtually grant each of those

three things, which he himself reckons up as the sum of what I intend under that argument, viz., (1.) "That the apostles speak to the churches, and of them, as supposing and judging them to be gracious persons. (2.) That the members of these churches had such an opinion of themselves. (3.) That they had this judgment one of another." Mr. Williams allows all these. He abundantly allows and asserts, that the members of churches are such as are supposed and judged, and rationally judged, to be gracious persons, by those that admit them; that they are taken in under that notion, and *from respect to such a character appearing on them;* and that they are *rationally judged to be so* by their fellow Christians; and that they must *look at such a character in themselves*, and must make such a *pretence.*

9. Since Mr. Williams abundantly allows that visible Christians, must "be believed in charity to be truly pious; and that they are such as have the moral image of Christ appearing in them, and supposed to be in them, and that they are to be loved on that account:" therefore very impertinent and inconsistent is the opposition he makes to my ninth argument, from the nature of that *brotherly love* required towards all visible Christians; which was to show, that visible Christians by the rule of Christ were to be *apprehended* to be true Christians.

10. In like manner, vain and to no purpose is the opposition he makes to my tenth argument, from the nature of *sacramental actions*, supposed in their intent and signification to be a solemn profession of those things wherein real piety consists, viz., a cordial acceptance of Christ and his benefits; from thence arguing, that a profession of these things is necessary; and so inferring that those who perform these actions, should suppose themselves truly to accept of Christ. Since both these things are in effect granted, that communicants must judge that they have sanctifying grace, and also that they must profess gospel holiness, a compliance with the call of the gospel, and falling in with the terms of salvation proposed, &c.

11. In vain also is the opposition he makes to my eleventh argument, from 1 Cor. xi. 28, "Let a man examine himself; and so let him eat." Inferring from thence, that a man ought to inquire concerning such a qualification in himself, as grace, in order to know whether he may come to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Since Mr Williams himself plainly supposes this very thing, "That men ought to look at such a qualification in themselves, as grace, and to inquire whether they have it, in order to determine whether they may present themselves to Christian sacraments."

12. If it be true, according to Mr Williams's representation of his own scheme, "That persons may not be admitted to sacraments, but under a notion of their being truly godly, and with respect to such a character appearing on them; and that persons themselves had need to look at such a qualification in themselves, and inquire whether they have it, in order to determine whether they may come to sacraments; it must be because if they find they have it *not*, they *may not* come, or (which is the same thing) *it is not lawful* for them to come. For it would be ridiculous to say that others must look at such a qualification in them, and must not admit them but from respect to such a character on them; and that they themselves also must look at such a qualification in themselves, and inquire whether they have it in order to determine whether they MAY come; when yet they *may* come whether they have it or no, and have as much of a lawful right without it, as with it. So that Mr. Williams has in effect determined against himself the grand point, which he himself insists on, as the point in dispute, according to the *true state of* the question. And therefore,

13. It follows from the foregoing concessions, that Mr. Williams is inconsistent with himself in all his arguments, that men may come to sacrament without such a qualification or character as that of true piety. "Because God has given no certain rule by which sacraments may be restrained to such;* *or* because that otherwise none might come but those that know they have such a character;† *or* because the contrary doctrine tends to bring saints into great perplexities in their attendance on sacraments;‡ *or from* the lawfulness of unregenerate men's attending other duties."‖ If there be any force in this arguing from other duties to an attendance on sacraments, then the argument will infer, that men must not be admitted to other duties, *but under the notion of their being truly godly, and from respect to such a character appearing on them, &c.*, as Mr. Williams insists with regard to Christian sacraments. And so if these things which Mr. Williams concedes and asserts, are true, in vain is all arguing from "the like tendency in sacraments to convert men, as in other duties."§ And in vain is it to argue the lawfulness of men's coming without this character, "from their obligation to perform external covenant duties,¶ and to carry themselves like saints."** And in vain is all arguing from pretended bad consequences of the contrary doctrine.††

14. The opposition Mr. Williams makes to my argument from Isa. lvi., especially those words, v. 5, 6, "The sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to love the Lord and be his servants, will I bring into my holy mountain." To prove that none have a right in the sight of God to the privileges of the Christian church, but those that love God, and are truly pious; I say, the opposition that Mr. Williams makes to this argument is frivolous, since he in effect grants the same thing (as above), yea, does expressly allow, that they must make pretences of being God's real friends, and loving God more than the world, p. 36.

15. If it be true as Mr. Williams allows and abundantly asserts, "That in order to persons' being admitted to holy communion in special ordinances, the Scripture has determined, that there must be an open profession and declaration of a PERSON'S believing, *or of a personal believing*, in Christ (*which is the same thing*), and of a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace,‡‡ and that therein must be a profession of gospel holiness;" then avails nothing to the contrary that great argument of his, taken from the state of *baptized infants*, that "they are already in the church, and in covenant, and are members in complete standing," &c. And that therefore no owning the covenant or professing godliness can be demanded of them.‖‖ And in vain is all that he has said to prove this in his discourse on the *Wheat* and *Tares*.§§

16. To what purpose is it, to object from the parable now mentioned, that the church ought not to go about to make a distinction between *wheat* and *tares*, in their admission of members, by pretending to discern the difference? When it is so apparent, that there is no pretence to any proper discerning in the case, nor any other distinction pleaded, than what is made by a judgment of charity. And when, according to Mr. Williams's own scheme, churches are obliged to make a distinction, in the rational judgment they pass, and to admit none but what they judge to be true saints; so that those who are *wheat*, in the eye of their judgment, only are to be admitted, and such as are *tares*, in the eye of their judgment, are to be excluded.

17. What is said by Mr. Williams of the visible church's being the *school*

* See Mr. Williams's book, p. 106. † Ibid. p. 108. ‡ p. 120. ‖ p. 123. § p. 126. ¶ p. 128. ** p. 131. †† p. 131. ‡‡ See how Mr. Williams expresses himself, p. 5. §§ See especially, p. 9. ‖‖ p. 99, 100.

of Christ, and men's being admitted into it as "disciples or scholars, some of them in order to attain grace" (p. 81, and 83), is nothing to the purpose, if it be as Mr. Williams allows and asserts, that in order to be admitted into this *school*, they must be supposed, in a reasonable judgment, to have this attainment already, and make a pretence to it, and a solemn profession of it, and must give moral evidence that they have it, and must be admitted into the school under no other notion than that of their being already possessed of it.

18. If it be as Mr. Williams expressly says, "That persons are not visible saints without a credible profession, visibility and moral evidence, not only of moral sincerity, but true holiness" (p. 139), then all is wholly insignificant and vain, that is said to prove, that the children of Israel were visible saints without any evidence of such holiness, by reason of the idolatry and gross and open wickedness of vast multitudes of them who are yet called God's people. And so likewise, all that is said to prove that the members of the primitive church had no other visibility of saintship than they, *because they are grafted into the same olive*. And also all that Mr. Williams has said to prove, that many of the members of the primitive churches were as grossly wicked as they.

19. Since according to Mr. Williams the terms of admission to the Jewish ordinances, were "the same as to Christian ordinances, the like profession and the same visibility of saintship required and no other;" as he strenuously asserts, p. 57, 61, 65; it will therefore follow from his foregoing concessions and assertions, that none were by God's appointment, to come to the passover, and have their children *circumcised*, but "such as openly professed and declared that they were convinced of the truth of God's word, and believed it with all their hearts; and professed a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace. Such as covenanted with God with their whole hearts, and gave up all their hearts and lives to Christ, such as subjected themselves to Christ with their whole hearts, and gave up themselves to him to be ruled, taught, and led by him; such as with all their hearts cast themselves on the mercy of God to enable them to keep covenant; such as professed to love God above the world, and professed more than common faith and moral sincerity, even true holiness, real piety; and who gave moral evidence, that they had such a qualification; and were received to the *passover*, &c., under that notion, and with respect to such a character appearing in them, and apprehended *to be in them*." And if these things are so, what is become of the argument from the passover and circumcision against the necessity of the qualifications I have insisted on!

20. To what purpose does Mr. Williams insist (p. 98) "That we read not a word in Scripture about John the Baptist's making any inquiry, whether the people he baptized made a credible profession of true piety?" When he himself insists that in order to admission to Christian sacraments, "men must make a credible profession of true piety." And why does he urge (p. 96, 97) that the profession the people made which John baptized, did not imply that they had saving repentance, but only an engagement to repent, hereafter? When he himself holds, that in order to admission to sacraments, men must *profess something more than common grace*, and not only promise it hereafter.

21. It makes nothing to any point in controversy between Mr. Williams and me, whether Judas partook of the Lord's supper or no, since according to Mr. Williams's own forementioned principles, as well as mine, he could not be admitted there "under any other notion than that of being truly pious, and from respect to such a character appearing on him, and a credible profession of gospel holiness; and since he might not lawfully come without some qualifications he had not, viz., *such a friendship for Christ, as is above lukewarmness*,

and above *serving two masters*, Christ and mammon, and a giving up all his *heart and life to Christ*, and *a real determination of his judgment and affections for Christ's word*, &c.

22. If it be true, as Mr. Williams allows, that ministers and churches ought not to admit adult persons to sacraments, without *a pious character appearing on them, and their professing and exhibiting moral evidence of gospel holiness*, then no good argument can be brought against such a way of admission, from the success of ministers in another way, or in any way whatsoever.

Besides these plain and obvious consequences of Mr. Williams's concessions, some other consequences will hereafter be observed under particular heads.

Thus Mr. Williams has not only abundantly given up the main point in that controversy I have lately been engaged in, and the main point which I have written in defence of; but he has in effect given up every point belonging to the whole controversy, every thing material insisted on through that whole book which he undertakes to answer. He has established every part of the scheme I have appeared in, and every particular argument I have used to confirm it; and answered, and overthrown every argument which he brings or pretends to support against it. And I should have no further occasion to say any thing in reply to him, if he had not really, through great part of his performance, argued for other things, opposite to those that have been rehearsed, which he so strenuously insists belong to his scheme; which arguing may seem to support another scheme, though nothing akin to his, any otherwise than as his scheme is indeed a mixture of many schemes, one clashing with, and destroying another; as will appear in the ensuing part of this reply.

SECTION III.

The inconsistence of the forementioned Concessions with the Lawfulness of unsanctified Persons coming to the Lord's Supper, and their Right to Sacraments in the sight of God.

MR. WILLIAMS in the book under consideration, which he entitles *the true state of the question*, insists upon it that the question to be debated is the question Mr. Stoddard debated in his dispute with Dr. Mather; in whose scheme Mr. Williams declares himself to be. Mr. Stoddard in his dispute with Dr. Mather asserted, "that it was lawful for some unsanctified men to come to the Lord's supper, and that they had a right so to do in the sight of God." And he declares that this was the point in dispute between him and Dr. Mather; as in *Appeal*, p. 20: "That which I am to show is, that some unsanctified men have a right before God to the Lord's supper." So Mr. Blake (who is so great an author with Mr. Williams) says, in his treatise *on the covenant*, p. 244, "That faith which is the condition of the promise, is not the condition *in foro Dei* (before God) of a title to the seal." And there (in the next p.) he insists, that "it is a common faith, that is believed by men not justified," which gives this title. Agreeably to these things Mr. Williams says (p. 132) some men have "a lawful right to the sacrament without sanctification." Which is the same thing as to say, *they have a right in the sight of God.* For if they have *no right in the sight of God* to come to the Lord's supper, then *it is not lawful in the sight of God* that they should come.

Here I would lay down this as a maxim;

There is some inward religion and virtue or other, some sincerity of heart, either moral or saving, that is necessary to a right to sacraments in the sight of

God, and in order to a lawful coming to them. No man, I trust, will say, that a man has a right in God's sight, who has no sort of seriousness of mind; and that merely outward sounds and motions, give him this right in God's sight, without regard to any property or quality of mind, and though this outward show is joined with the most horrid and resolved secret irreligion and wickedness. Mr. Williams in particular utterly disclaims such doctrine as this in 3d and 4th pages of his preface, and always maintains that in order to men's lawful coming, they must be *morally sincere;* as there in his preface, and also in p. 25, 27, 30, 35, 111. In p. 115, he supposes, that if a man *makes a doubt of his moral sincerity, no divine will advise him to come till he knows.*

Having observed this, I now desire it may be considered, whether it be reasonable to suppose, as Mr. Williams does, that God would give men that are without grace, a lawful right to sacraments, so that this qualification itself should be nothing necessary to a proper and rightful claim to these ordinances; and yet that he would wholly forbid them to come, and others to admit them, without their making some pretence to it, and exhibiting moral evidence that they have it: that moral sincerity is the qualification which by God's own appointment invests persons with a lawful right to sacraments, and that by his institution nothing more is requisite to a lawful right; and yet that he has commanded them not to come, nor others to allow them to come, without making a profession of something *more* than moral sincerity, as Mr. Williams says. Mr. Williams supposes that God requires us, before we admit persons, to seek credible evidence of true piety, and to see to it that we have reasonable ground to believe they have it; otherwise not to allow them to come: and yet that God does not look on such qualification requisite in itself, when all is done, and that he has given them as true and lawful a right to come without it, as with it. If God insists upon it, as Mr. Williams supposes, that members should be admitted *under no other notion* than of their being truly godly, *and from respect to such a character appearing on them*, is it not plain, that God looks on such a character in itself requisite, in order to a person's being a rightful subject of such a privilege? If the want of this qualification does not in the least hinder a person's lawful right to a thing, on what account can the want of an appearance of it and pretence to it, warrant and oblige others to hinder his taking possession of that thing?

That we should be obliged to require a credible pretence and evidence of the being of a thing, in order to a certain purpose, the being of which is not requisite to that purpose; or that some evidence of a thing should be necessary, and yet withal no necessity there should be any foundation of such evidence, in the being of the thing to be made evident; that it should be necessary for us to seek evidence that something is true, and yet there be no need in order to the intended purpose, that there be any such truth to be made evident; if these things are the dictates of common sense, I am willing all that are possessed of any degree of common sense should be judges.

If God has plainly revealed, that gospel holiness is not necessary in itself in order to men's lawful right to sacraments, as Mr. Williams greatly insists, then his churches need not *believe it to be necessary;* yea, it is their duty *to believe that it is* not *necessary*, as it is their duty to believe what God says to be true. But yet Mr. Williams holds, that God forbids his churches to admit any to sacraments, unless they first have some rational evidence obliging them *to believe that they have gospel holiness.* Now how palpable is the inconsistence, that we must be obliged to believe men have a qualification in order to our suffering them to come, which yet at the same time we need not believe to be

necessary for them to have in order to their coming, but which God requires us to believe to be unnecessary! Or in other words, that God has made it necessary for us to believe or suppose men are truly pious, in order to our lawfully allowing them to take the sacrament, and yet at the same time requires us to believe no such thing as their being pious is necessary in order to their lawfully taking the sacraments!

Mr. Stoddard (whose principles Mr. Williams, in preface p. 3, declares himself to be fully established in) not only says, that some unsanctified men have "a right before God to the Lord's Supper," but strongly asserts, over and over, that they are FIT to be admitted to the Lord's Supper. that they are DULY QUALIFIED, FIT MATTER for church membership" (Appeal, p. 15, 16), and Mr. Williams argues that "such qualifications as some unsanctified men have, are SUFFICIENT to bring them into the church." Now if it be so, what business have we to demand evidence or a pretence of any thing further? What case in the world can be mentioned parallel to it, in any nation or age? Are there any such laws or regulations to be found in any society, nation, city or family, civil society, military or academic, stated society or occasional, that the society should be required to insist on some credible pretence and evidence of a certain qualification, in order to persons being admitted to the privileges of the society; prohibiting their being admitted *under any other notion* than as persons possessed of that qualification, or *without a respect, in their admission, to such a character appearing on them:* and yet at the same time, by the laws of that very society, or the head of it, that qualification is not necessary; but persons are declared, without any such qualification, to have a LAWFUL RIGHT, to be FIT MATTER, to be DULY QUALIFIED, and to have SUFFICIENT qualifications to be admitted to these privileges, without that qualification?

If some men have a right in the sight of God to sacraments, without true piety, and are *fit*, and *duly qualified* without it in his sight, and by his institution, and yet the church must not admit them unless they are truly pious in their sight; then the eye of man must require higher terms, than the infinitely holy eye of God himself; they must look for something that the eye of God looks not for, and which he judges them duly qualified without.

Mr. Williams when speaking of the evidence, on which he supposes the church ought to judge persons to be real saints, from time to time adds, that on such evidence "the church is obliged, in their external carriage, *to treat them as saints*, and admit them to the external privileges of the church." So p. 9, 12, &c. p. 13 and 14, and in other places. But what does he mean by treating them *as saints*, in admitting them to the external privileges of the church? If *sinners* have as much of a lawful right to these privileges, as *saints*, then why is giving them these privileges, a treating them as *saints*, any more than as *sinners?* If it belongs to an ignorant child, to be admitted into school, as much as one that is learned, then how is it treating him as one that is learned, to admit him? Mr. Williams (p. 11) giving a reason why he that professes conviction of the truth of the gospel, &c., ought to be admitted to sacraments, says, "though this conviction may be only by moral evidence and common illumination, yet the church know not but it is done on a divine and gracious discovery." But how can this be a reason? What if the church *did know* that it was not on a gracious discovery, if the man has a right in the sight of God without, and God has made it his duty to come to sacraments without? Surely the church have no right to forbid him to do that which God has given him a right to do, and made it his duty to do; as Mr. Stoddard says (*Doct. of Inst. Churches*, p. 20), "The church may not hinder any man from doing his duty."

Therefore if this be Mr. Stoddard's question, "whether some unsanctified men may lawfully come to the Lord's supper," and if this be the grand point in dispute, the thing which Mr. Williams undertakes to maintain, as he often declares, then it is most plainly evident, that in conceding and asserting those things forementioned, he does in effect abundantly give up that which he himself insists on as the grand point in controversy; and so makes void and vain all his own labor, and for himself effectually confutes all that he has written.

SECTION IV.

Concerning Mr. Williams's Notion of a public Profession of Godliness in terms of an indeterminate and double Signification.

According to Mr. Williams the profession of godliness must be in words not of a determinate meaning, or "without any discrimination in the meaning of the words obliging us to understand them of saving religion," p. 6. They must make an "open declaration of their sincere consent to the terms of the covenant, without any discrimination, by which it can be determined, that the consent signified by the words is a gracious consent," p. 9. And without any marks of difference, or any distinction in the words, whereby we can be enabled to judge when they mean a saving faith, and when a different one," p. 10, 50 and 53. That "nothing should be expressed in the words of the profession, but what some unsanctified men may say, and speak true," p. 47. He supposes, that the primitive Christians in the profession they made of faith, did not *speak only in that sense*, viz., so as to signify justifying faith; and that "the persons admitted did not understand that their profession was understood by those that admitted them, only in that sense," p. 58.

Agreeably to this notion of making a profession in words of indiscriminate meaning, and professing godliness without godliness, and yet speaking true, Mr. Williams (in p. 44) allows, "that men must be by profession godly persons, in order to come to the sacrament;" and yet in the next sentence he denies, "that Christian grace itself is requisite in the person who is to come to the sacrament, or that the dictate of his conscience that he has it, is the thing that gives him a right to offer himself." And agreeably to this last clause, Mr. Stoddard (of whose opinion Mr. Williams professes himself fully to be) expressly maintains, that a man "may and ought to come to the Lord's supper, though he knows himself to be in a natural condition." (*Doct. of Inst. Churches*, p. 21, see also his sermon on this controversy, p. 13.) So that putting these things together, it must be agreeable to Mr. Williams's scheme that a man has a right to make a profession of godliness, without having godliness, and without any dictate of his conscience that he has the thing he professes, yea though he knows he has it not! And all this is made out by the doctrine of professing godliness in words that are ambiguous and of two meanings.

This notion of a solemn profession of godliness, in words of a double meaning, *without any marks of difference in their signification*, is the great peculiarity of Mr. Williams's scheme; and in all his controversy with me, this appears to be the main hinge of the whole affair. Therefore I would particularly consider it.

And for the greater distinctness and clearness, I will lay down certain positions, as of most evident truth; observing some of their no less plain and evident consequences

Position I. Words declare or profess nothing any otherwise than by their signification: for to declare or profess something by words, is to signify something by words. And therefore if nothing is signified by words of a pretended profession, nothing is really professed; and if something be professed, no more is professed than the words of the profession signify or import.

Position. II. If a man goes about to declare or profess any particular thing by words which have no distinguishing signification, or without any signs or discriminating marks by which men may be enabled to distinguish what he means, his words are vain to the pretended purpose, and wholly fail of answering the end of words, which is to convey the thing meant, to others' understanding, or to give notice to others of the thing that is supposed or understood.*

Therefore to use words thus in common conversation, is to act in a vain trifling manner, more like children than men: but to use words thus in the sacred services of God's house, and solemn duties of his worship, is something much worse than children's play. But thus Mr. Williams expressly declares, words are to be used in a public profession of religion. He says (p. 10), "And these words are so used in such cases, without any marks of difference, whereby we are enabled to judge when they mean a saving faith, and when a different one."

Position III. A profession made in words that are either equivocal, or general, equally signifying several distinct things, without any marks of difference or distinction, by which we are enabled to judge which is meant, is not a profession or signification of *any one* of those several things; nor can they afford any rational ground of understanding or apprehending any *particular thing*. Thus, for instance, if a man, using an equivocal term, should say, that such an evening a king was in that room, without any marks of difference or discrimination whatsoever, by which others could discern whether by a king, he meant the ruler of a kingdom, or a king used in a game of chess: the word thus used would be no declaration that the head of a kingdom was there at such a time; nor would they give any notice of any such thing to those to whom he spoke, or give them any rational ground to understand or judge any such thing.

Or if a man should use a *general* term, comprehending various particular sorts, without at all distinguishing or pointing forth any one particular sort, he thereby professes no one particular sort. Thus if a man professes that he has metal in his pocket, not saying what sort of metal, whether gold, silver, brass, iron, lead, or tin; his words are no profession that he has gold.

So if a man professes sincerity or religion, designedly using terms of double signification, or (which comes to the same thing) of general signification, equally signifying two entirely distinct things, either *moral sincerity*, or *real piety*, his words are no profession of real piety; he makes no credible profession, and indeed no profession at all of *gospel holiness*.

Position IV. If a man who knows himself to be destitute of any certain qualification, yet makes a profession or pretence, in words of double meaning, equally signifying that qualification, and something else very different with a design to recommend himself to others' judgment, as possessed of that qualification, he is guilty of deceitful equivocation. This is the notion of deceitful equivocation, viz., the using words of double meaning, or capable of double application, with a design to induce others to judge something to be true, which

* The Apostle Paul says, 1 Cor. xiv. 7, "Even things without life, giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?"—Mr. Locke says, *Hum. Und.* Vol. 2. Edit. 7, p. 103, "He that uses words of any language without DISTINCT ideas in his mind, to which he applies them, does so far as he uses them in discourse, only make a noise without any sense or signification."

is not true. But he that goes about to recommend himself by such terms to others' opinion or judgment as being what he at the same time knows he is not, endeavors to induce them to believe what he knows is not true, which is to deceive them.*

But if the scheme which Mr. Williams undertakes to defend, were true, it would follow that such a kind of equivocation as this (be it far from us to suppose it) is what the infinitely wise and holy God has instituted to be publicly made use of in the solemn services of his house, as the very condition of persons' admission to the external privileges of his people! For Mr. Williams abundantly asserts, that persons must be *esteemed* in the judgment and apprehension of others to have true piety; and that one thing that must *be done in order to it*, one thing pertaining to the moral evidence that *recommends* them to this judgment, is the profession they make of religion, p. 5, 139, 47, 132, 44. In p. 42, speaking of the profession of visible Christians, he has these words: "And it is from the nature and purport of this profession, we say, the church is to judge the members to be wise virgins, or what they make a show of." And Mr. Williams insists upon it, that according to Christ's institution, this must be in words equally signifying true godliness, and something else, without any discrimination or marks of difference. This is the scheme! And, certainly such a doctrine of deceitful equivocation in the public exercises of religion, is more agreeable to the principles and practices of a religion I am loth to name, than the true religion of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Williams says, p. 35, "I am at a loss to conceive how it will help the cause of truth to represent those who are of Mr. Stoddard's opinion, as teaching men that they enter into covenant with God with known and allowed guile." Supposing I had made such a representation, I can tell him how it would have helped the cause of truth (as it would be speaking nothing but the truth), if he be one of Mr. Stoddard's opinion (as he says he is) and represents his own opinion truly.

But let the unreasonableness of this notion of professing gospel holiness in words of two meanings, without any discrimination or mark of difference, be a little further considered. Since it is allowed that gospel holiness is the thing which is to be exhibited in the profession, and there are words which signify this by a determinate meaning, why must they needs be avoided, and words of doubtful and double signification only made use of?† Since the design of the profession is to exhibit to others' understanding that very thing; if the proper and distinguishing names of that must nevertheless be avoided in the profession, and this, for that very reason, that they point forth to others' understanding that very thing by a determinate meaning; then we are brought to this gross absurdity, viz., that the end of a profession is to exhibit to others' understanding and reasonable judgment a *particular qualification;* but at the same time such words only must be made use of as do not distinctly point forth to others' understanding and judgment that *particular qualification.* The church are to seek and demand a profession, that shall determine their *rational judgment;* but yet are designedly to avoid such a profession as shall *determine their understandings.* Be it far from us to attribute to the allwise God any such absurd and inconsistent constitution.

* "To advance a dubious proposition, knowing it will be understood in a sense different from what you give it in your mind, is an *equivocation*, in breach of good faith and sincerity." *Chambers' Dictionary*, under the word *Equivocation.*

† Mr. Williams (p. 6) speaks of a profession in terms of indiscriminate signification, when not contradicted in life, as "The sole entire evidence, which the church as a church, is to have, by divine appointment, in order to that public judgment it is to make of the saintship of men."

Mr Williams says, "Charity obliges the church to understand the words of the professors in the most favorable sense." But charity does not oblige us to understand their words in any other sense than that in which they professedly use them. But in churches which professedly act on Mr. Williams's scheme (if any such there be) the professors who are admitted, professedly use ambiguous words, or words equally signifying two entirely distinct things, without discrimination or marks of difference; and therefore charity obliges us to understand their words no otherwise, than as signifying that they have one or other of those two things; and not that they have one in particular: for their words do not signify this, in the sense they professedly use them. If a man that is indebted to me, professes that he has either gold or brass, which he promises to pay me; or if he uses an equivocal or general term, that equally, and without marks of difference, signifies either one or the other: charity may oblige me to believe what he says, which is that he has either gold or brass; but no charity obliges me to believe that he has gold, which he does not say.

Mr. Williams, in his description of such a profession as Christ has instituted, in order to admission to sacraments, often mentions two things, viz., "a profession of something *present*, a present believing in Christ, and cordial consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, &c. And a promise of something *future*." And with regard to the latter he is very full in it, that what is promised for time to come is *saving faith, repentance and obedience.** Now what reason can be given why we should use words of double meaning in the former part of the profession more than in the latter? Seeing Mr. Williams allows that we must *profess* gospel holiness as well as *promise* it, and seeing we may and must make use of words of indiscriminate and double meaning in professing present gospel holiness, why should we not do so too in promising what is future; and so equivocate in our solemn vows and oaths as the Papists do? If Mr. Williams says it is very hard for men to discern the discrimination between moral sincerity and gospel holiness; I answer, there is as much need to discern the difference in order understandingly to *promise* gospel holiness with discrimination, as to *profess* it with discrimination.

Mr. Williams says (p. 8), "It is a received rule among mankind, in all public judgments, to interpret words in the most extensive and favorable sense, that the nature of the words or expressions will bear." I know not what he means: but if he means (as he must if he means any thing to the purpose) that it is a received rule amongst mankind, to trust or accept, or regard any professions or declarations that men make with professed design, in words of double and indiscriminate meaning, without any marks of difference by which their meaning can be known, for that very end that they may be used with a safe conscience, though they have no dictates of their own consciences, that they have that which others are to believe they have; I say, if this be a received rule among mankind, it is a rule that mankind has lately received from Mr. Williams. Heretofore mankind, societies, or particular persons, would have been counted very foolish for regarding such professions. Is this the way in earthly kingdoms, in professions of allegiance to temporal princes, in order to their admission to the privileges of good subjects? Do they choose equivocal terms to put into their oaths of allegiance, to that end that men may use them and speak true, though they are secret enemies? There are two competitors for the kingdom of this world, *Christ* and *Satan:* the design of a public profession of religion is, to declare on which side men are. And is it agreeable

* Preface, p. 3 5, 24, 25, 22, 7, 58, 69.

to the custom of mankind in such cases, to make laws that no other than ambiguous words shall be used, or to accept of such in declarations of this kind? There are two competitors for the kingdom of Great Britain, king George, and the Pretender: is it then the constitution of king George and the British Parliament, that men should take oaths of allegiance, contrived in words of indeterminate signification, to the end that men who are in their hearts enemies to king George, and friends to the Pretender, may use them and speak true? And certainly mankind, those of them that have common sense, never in any affairs of life look on such professions worth a rush. Would Mr. Williams himself, if tried, in any affair wherein his temporal interest is concerned, trust such professions as these? If any man that he has dealings with, should profess to him that he had pawned for him, in a certain place, a hundred pounds, evidently, yea, professedly using the expression as an ambiguous one, so that there is no understanding by it, what is pawned there, whether a hundred pounds in money, or a hundred weight of stones: if he should inquire of the man what he meant, and he should reply, You have no business to *search my heart*, or to go *to turn my heart inside out;* you are obliged in charity to understand my words *in the most favorable sense;* would Mr. Williams in this case stick to his own *received rule?* Would he regard such a profession, or run the venture of one *sixpence* upon it? Would he not rather look on such a man as affronting him, and treating him as though he would make a fool of him? And would not he know, that every body else would think him a fool, if he should suffer himself to be gulled by such professions, in things which concern his own private interest? And yet it seems, this is the way in which he thinks he ought to conduct himself as a minister of Christ, and one intrusted by him in affairs wherein his honor and the interests of his kingdom are concerned.

And now I desire it may be judged by such as are possessed of human understanding, and are not disabled by prejudice from exercising it, whether this notion of Mr. Williams's, of making a solemn profession of gospel holiness in words of indiscriminate meaning, be not too absurd to be received by the reason God has given mankind. This peculiar notion of his is apparently the life and soul of his scheme; the main pillar of his temple, on which the whole weight of the building rests, which if it be broken, the whole falls to the ground. For if this notion of his be disproved, then, inasmuch as it is agreed, that true godliness must be professed, it will follow, that it must be professed in words properly signifying the thing by a determinate meaning, which therefore no ungodly men can use, and speak true; and that therefore men must have true godliness in order to a right in the sight of God to make such profession, and to receive the privileges depending thereon: which implies and infers all those principles of mine which Mr. Williams opposes in his book, and confutes all that he says in opposition to them.

SECTION V.

Showing that Mr. Williams, in supposing that unsanctified Men may profess such things, as he allows must be professed, and yet speak true, is inconsistent with Mr. Stoddard, and with himself.

Mr. Williams denies, that in order to men's being admitted to sacraments, they need make any peculiar profession, distinguished from what an unregene-

rate man may make, p. 44, 50, 6, 9, 10, 45, 46, and 53, or that they need to profess "any thing but what an unregenerate man may say, and speak true," p. 47. And that they need make no profession but what is "compatible with an unregenerate state," p. 8. And yet the reader has seen what things he says all must profess in order to come to sacraments. One thing he says they must profess, is "a real conviction of the heart, of the divine truth of God's word; that they do sincerely and with all their hearts believe the gospel." And these things he says, are agreeable to the opinion of Mr. Stoddard, and the doctrine he taught, p. 32, and 36. Let us compare these things with the doctrine Mr. Stoddard taught, that natural men do not "believe the gospel," *Benef. of the Gosp.*, p. 89. That they "do not properly believe the word of God," *Guide to Christ*, p. 26. That "they do not believe the testimony of God, do not lay weight on the word of God; that they do not believe the report of the gospel," *Safety of Ap.* Edit. 2. p. 229. That they do "not receive God's testimony, nor lay weight on it," *Ibid.* p. 99. That "there is no man, how great soever his profession, how large soever his knowledge, that continues in a natural condition, who thoroughly believes the truth;" i. e., that men may be saved by Christ's righteousness, *Ibid.* p. 4 and 5. That "common illumination does not convince men of the truth of the gospel," *Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 148, 149. How then could it be the doctrine Mr. Stoddard taught, that natural men may really and with all their hearts believe and be convinced of the truth of the gospel?

And Mr. Williams himself in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 144, 115, says, "man since the fall is naturally ignorant of divine truth, and an enemy to it, and full of prejudices against the truth." And says, further, *Ibid.* p. 114, "The renewing of the Holy Ghost makes a universal change of the heart and life.—He knows the doctrine contained in the Bible in a new manner.—Before he had a view of the truth as a *doubtful uncertain thing;* he received it as a thing which was probably true;—and perhaps for the most part it appeared something likely to answer the end proposed. But now the gospel appears to him *divinely true* and *real*," &c. But how do these things consist with men's being before conversion, sincerely and with all their hearts convinced of the divine truth of the gospel? Can that be, and yet men *view it as a doubtful uncertain thing*, it not yet appearing to them *divinely true and real?*

Again, Mr. Williams supposes, that some unsanctified men may speak true, and profess "a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, a compliance with the call of the gospel, submission to the proposals of it, satisfaction with that device for our salvation that is revealed in the gospel, and with the offer which God makes of himself to be our God in Christ Jesus, a fervent desire of Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace, and an earnest purpose and resolution to seek salvation on the terms of it (p. 11), and a falling in with the terms of salvation proposed in the gospel, with a renouncing of all other ways (which he speaks of as agreeable to Mr. Stoddard's opinion, p. 32). Quite contrary to the current doctrine of Calvinistic divines; contrary to the opinion of Mr. Guthrie, whom he cites as a witness in his favor (Pref. p. 4), who insists on satisfaction with that device for our salvation which is revealed in the gospel, and with the offer which God makes of himself to be our God in Christ, as the peculiar nature of saving faith. And contrary to the principles of Mr. Perkins (another author he quotes as his voucher) delivered in these very words, which Mr. Williams cites in the present point (p. 11), "That a desire of the favor and mercy of God in Christ, and the means to attain that favor, is a special grace of God, and hath the promise of blessedness.—That wicked men

cannot sincerely desire these means of eternal life, *faith*, *repentance*, mortification, reconciliation," &c. And exceeding contrary to the constant doctrine of Mr. Stoddard (though he says it was his opinion), who ever insisted, that all unconverted sinners under the gospel are so far from heartily consenting to the covenant of grace, and complying with the call of the gospel, and falling in with the terms of salvation proposed in in it, renouncing all other ways, as Mr. Williams supposes, that they are wilful rejecters of Christ, despisers of the gospel, and obstinate refusers of offered mercy. So he says, "the man that has but common grace—sets himself against the way of salvation which God prescribes," *Nat. of Sav. Conv.* p. 10. "In awakened sinners, it is not merely from weakness, but from pride and sturdiness of spirit, that they do not come to Christ," *Safety of Ap.*, p 229. And in other places he says, that it is "from the hardness and stubbornness of natural men's hearts," that they do not comply with the gospel: that "there is a mighty opposition in their hearts to believe in Christ," because it is "cross to their haughty spirit: that they are enemies to this way of salvation: that they are dreadfully averse to come to Christ." See Book *of Three Sermons*, p. 84, *Guide to Christ*, p. 55, *Safety of Ap.*, p. 106, and 194.

And this scheme of our author is in a no less glaring manner contrary to the doctrine of Mr. Williams himself, in his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11 (p. 25, 26, 27). Speaking to those "whose natures remain unrenewed and unsanctified"—see his words p. 25—he says, p. 27, "You are opposing all the means of your own deliverance and salvation. The offers of grace, the allurements and invitations of the great Saviour of the world, have all been ineffectual to persuade you to accept of deliverance from a slavery you are willingly held in. Nay, you strive against the liberty of the sons of God, and labor to find out all manner of difficulties and hinderances in the way of it. If you pray for it, you do not desire it should yet come, but would stay a while longer." And are these the persons who can truly profess, that they comply with the call of the gospel, and submit to the proposals of it, and are satisfied with the device for our salvation, and with the offers of the gospel, and consent to the terms of the covenant of grace *with all their hearts*, renouncing all other ways?—It is not much more easy to make these things consist with what he says in his answer to Mr. Croswell (p. 26): he there says, "there is not a son nor daughter of Adam excluded from salvation, who will accept Christ upon God's offer, and take him in his person and offices, and whole work of redemption, to be their Saviour, and they find themselves willing to accept of Christ as so offered to them, and PLEASED WITH THAT DEVICE for their salvation, and heartily choosing him to be to them and in them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." See also to the same purpose, *Ibid.* p. 32, 33, and 94.

Mr. Williams, though he holds, that it is lawful for some unsanctified men to come to sacraments, yet supposes it not to be lawful for those that are *lukewarm* in religion to come, p. 35. So that according to his scheme, some unsanctified professors are above *lukewarmness;* that is to say, their hearts within them are truly hot or fervent with Christian zeal, and they such as Christ will never spew out of his mouth; in a great inconsistence with the Scripture. He suggests, that it is an injury done to the cause of truth, in me, to represent Mr. Stoddard as being of another opinion (p. 35), but let us see whether such a representation be an injury to truth or no. Mr. Stoddard taught, that natural men have "no sincerity in them," *Guide to Christ*, p. 60, 61. That "their hearts are dead as a stone, that there is no disposition or inclination to any thing that is good, but a total emptiness of all goodness, *Ibid.* p. 63. That "some of

them have considerable shows of goodness, there is an appearance of good desires, &c., but there is nothing of goodness in all this; that all they do is in hypocrisy," *Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 73. That "they are acted by a lust of self-love in all their religion: if they are swept and garnished, they are empty: there may be some similitude of faith and love, but no reality, not a spark of goodness in their hearts; though corruption may be restrained, yet it reigns." He speaks abundantly to the same purpose in his sermon, entitled, *Natural men are under the government of self-love.*

And Mr. Williams himself, in his sermon on Psal. xci. 1, describing carnal men, by which he means the same with unconverted men (as is evident through the book, particularly p. 36), says, p. 27, 28, that to such "religion looks like a dull, unpleasant kind of exercise, and so different from the sensual joys and pleasures which they choose, that they *hate* to set about it, as long as they dare let it alone; and would do as little as ever they can at it: that when they durst not let it alone any longer, they set about it, but would fain despatch it as *soon*, and as *easily* as they can; because it seems to them a *miserable, uncomfortable* sort of life. Ask your own conscience (says he), see if this be not the *truth* of the case." Now let the reader judge, whether this be a description of persons whom it would be injurious to represent as having nothing above *lukewarmness.*

Another thing, which Mr. Williams supposes must be professed in order to come to sacraments, and therefore according to him is what an unsanctified man can profess, and speak true, is, "That they with all their hearts cast themselves upon the mercy of God, to help them to keep covenant," p. 31, and 32. And yet elsewhere he mentions a depending on Christ for things of this nature, as a discriminating mark of a true Christian, *Ser. on Christ a King and Witness*, p. 19. Under a use of examination, he there says, "Do you depend on Christ to protect you from all your spiritual enemies, to restore you to holiness, to subdue all your heart to the will of God, to make you partakers of his image and moral perfections, and in that way to preserve and lead you to your true perfection and eternal happiness?"

Mr. Williams supposes, p. 36, that the profession men must make in order to come to sacraments, implies *real friendship* to God, "loving God more than his enemies, loving him above the world;" and therefore, according to Mr. Williams, unsanctified men may make this profession also, *and speak true;* contrary to the whole current of Scripture, which represents unsanctified men as "the enemies of God, those that have not the love of God in them, under the power of a carnal mind, &c." And contrary to the unanimous voice of all sound divines, yea, of the whole Christian world. Mr. Williams in the forementioned place blames me, that I had intimated (as he supposes) that the profession which Mr. Stoddard taught to be necessary, did not imply "real friendship, and loving God above his enemies, and above the world." Let us then compare this with Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, as that is extant in his writings. He speaks of it as a "property of saving grace, wherein it specifically differs from common grace, that a true love to God prizes God above all the world," *Nat. of Conv.* p. 7. "That every natural man prefers vain and base things before God," *Ibid.* p. 96. "That they are all enemies to God, and the very being of God," *Ibid.* p. 5, and 97. "That their hearts are full of enmity to God," *Ibid.* p. 55. "That they have an aversion to those gracious actions of loving God, and trusting in Christ, and are under the dominion of a contrary inclination," *Ibid.* p. 67. "That those of them whose consciences are enlightened, and are reforming their lives, have no love; and that it is a burden

to them that they suspect there is such a God, that they wish there was not such a one. And that they are haters of God, and are so addicted to their own interest, that they have a bitter spirit towards God, have an ill affection to him, and are adversaries to his felicity," *Ibid.* p. 97, *Three Serm.* p. 38, 39. "That they are governed by a spirit of self-love, and are wholly destitute of love to God; that some of them do confess that they have but little love to God; but indeed they have not one spark of love to God in their hearts, *Three Serm.* p. 48. That they set their interest at the right hand of God's glory—as if God's honor were not to be regarded, compared with their interest," &c. &c., *Ibid.* p. 62, 63.

So Mr. Williams himself (*Christ a King and Witness*, p. 145) plainly supposes, that before conversion, men love the world more than God. For, speaking of the nature of the change wrought in conversion, he says, "things are quite turned about, God and Christ are got into the place the world had before." Again (*Ibid.* p. 18,) he says, "You must know that there is no man who is not either a true subject to Christ, or his enemy. That man who does not submit to Christ as his King and Lord, by bearing true faith and allegiance to him, is the enemy of Christ and his kingdom. Such are all they who will not depend on him, believe in him, give up themselves, and all to him." And again, p. 106, 107, "Man, since the fall, has a natural unlikeness to God, and *hates* the holiness and purity of the divine nature." And in his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11, he says, to his hearers, "If your nature remain unrenewed and unsanctified you are the enemies of God and Christ by wicked works, and an impure heart." But yet now it seems, some of these may profess *real friendship to Christ, and loving him above the world*, and speak true.

And these things are no less inconsistent with what Mr. Williams says in the very book under consideration. He here says, p. 36, "Why should any divine now tell us, that these same professions do not imply that there are any pretences of any real friendship, that they import no pretence of loving God more, yea, not so much as his enemies, no pretence to love God above the world?" When he himself is the divine that tells us so, or plainly supposes so in this very book of his. For, in p. 8, 9, having mentioned the profession communicants may be required to make, he then says that "such a profession contains all that is essential to true religion in it; and if this is the fruit of the love of God, it is true godliness:" plainly supposing, that persons may have these things without the love of God; as the reader will see more evidently if he views the place. So that the profession must imply real friendship, and love to God, even above the world; and yet must contain only such things as may be with or without the love of God, indiscriminately.

Mr. Williams allows, that in order to come to sacraments men ought to profess a "subjection to Christ with all their hearts, p. 10, and to be devoted to the service of God, p. 49, and to give up themselves to Christ, to be taught, ruled and led by him in a gospel way to salvation," p. 31, and 32. And though he and Mr. Stoddard taught, that it is lawful for some unsanctified men to come to sacraments, yet Mr. Williams supposes it to be unlawful for any to come to sacraments *serving two masters;* and says, Mr. Stoddard taught that they ought to covenant with God with their whole hearts, and give up all their hearts and lives to Christ." We are therefore to understand Mr. Williams, that some unsanctified men can profess all these things, *and speak true.* Strange doctrine for a Christian divine! Let us see whether Mr. Stoddard taught such doctrine He taught that "faith in Christ is the first act of obedience, that any sinner does perform; that it is by faith that a man first gives himself to be God's servant," *Safety of Ap.*, 228, 229. That "all those that are not converted, are

under the dominion of sin, enemies to God," *Ibid.* p. 5. That 'there is no obedience to God in what they do," who have only common grace; that "they do not attend the will of God," *Ibid.* p. 7. That "all ungodly men are servants of Satan, and live in a way of rebellion against God," *Ibid.* 94. That "they are enemies to the authority of God; to the wisdom, power and justice of God, yea, to the very being of God; they have a preparedness of heart to all wickedness that is committed in the world, if God did not restrain them; that if they were in the circumstances that the fallen angels are in, they would be as the very devils, *Ibid.* p. 95. That their hearts are like the hearts of devils, as full of sin as a toad is full of poison, having no inclination to any thing that is good," *Guide to Christ*, p. 68; see also *Benef. of the Gosp.*, p. 103. That "they utterly neglect the end they were made for, and make it their business to serve themselves; they care not whether God's glory sinks or swims," *Three Serm.* p. 62. That "they hate God, because God crosses them in his laws," *Ibid.* p. 38. These are the men, which Mr. Williams supposes must, and may (some of them) truly profess a subjection to Christ with all their hearts, and to be devoted to Christ; and the men which he would bear us in hand, that Mr. Stoddard taught, might covenant with God with their whole hearts, and give up all their hearts and lives to Christ. Mr. Stoddard taught, that "men that have but common grace, go quite in another path than that which God directs to;" that "they set themselves against the way of salvation God prescribes," *Safety*, p. 10. That "man in his natural state is an enemy to the way of salvation;" that "he is an enemy to the law of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ," *Ibid.* p. 106.

But yet these, if we believe Mr. Williams, may truly profess a subjection to Christ with all their hearts, and give up themselves to him, to be taught, ruled, and led by him in a gospel way of salvation. Yet if we believe him, we must have the trouble of disbelieving him again; for in these things he is as inconsistent with himself, as he is with Mr. Stoddard. For in his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11, p. 26, 27, he says to those whose natures are *unrenewed and unsanctified*, "If you are without Christ, you are in a state of slavery to sin, led about of divers lusts,* and under the reigning power and dominion of your corruptions, which debase your souls, and bring them down from the dignity of their nature, to the vilest, most shameful and accursed bondage. And by means of sin ye are in bondage to the devil, the most hateful and accursed enemy of God and your own souls; and are opposing all the means of your own deliverance. The offers of grace, the calls and invitations of the gospel, have been ineffectual to persuade you to accept of deliverance from a slavery you are willingly held in. Nay, you strive against the liberty of the sons of God." And yet some of these are (if we believe what Mr. Williams now says) such as are subject to Christ with all their hearts, give up all their hearts and lives to Christ, and give up themselves to be taught, ruled, and led by him in a gospel way to salvation. Mr. Williams, in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 18, under a use of examination, giving marks of trial, says, "Have you unreservedly given up your souls and bodies to him [viz. Christ]? You must be all Christ's and have *no other master*. You must be given to him without reserve, both in body and spirit, which are his." But now it seems these are no discriminating evidences of true piety: he says, p. 118, "A man naturally hates God should reign." And p. 119, speaking of the natural man, he says, "He hates to be controlled, and in all things subjected to God.—He really owns no God but himself." But if so, then certainly he is not subject to God with all his heart.

* And yet now it seems, some such do serve but one master, and give up themselves to Christ to be led by him.

Our author in the book more especially attended to, says, p. 31, He "knows of nobody who has any controversy with me in *what he calls my* loose way of arguing," in my saying, "The nature of things seems to afford no good reason why the people of Christ should not openly profess a proper respect to him in their hearts, as well as a true notion of him in their heads." And then in that and the following page, proceeds to show what respect Mr. Stoddard, and those that think with him, suppose men must profess in order to come to the Lord's supper; and in p. 33, speaks of such a profession as equally honorable to Christ with a profession of saving grace. And as according to Mr. Williams, no profession, discriminating what is professed from common grace, can be required, so common grace must be supposed to be a *proper respect to Christ in the heart.* Now let us see what Mr. Stoddard says. "There is (says he) an opposition between saving and common grace;—they have a contrariety one to another, and are at war one with the other, and would destroy one the other. Common grace, are LUSTS, and do oppose saving grace," *Nat. of Sav. Conv.* p. 9. "Men that are in a natural condition—such of them as are addicted to morality and religion, are serving their LUSTS therein. The most orderly natural men do live an *ungodly* life; yea, their very *religion is iniquity,*" *Ibid.* p. 96, 97 "Their best works are not only sinful, but *properly sins;* they are acted by a, SPIRIT OF LUST in all that they do," *Saf. of App.* p. 168. "Moral virtues do not render men acceptable to God; for though they look like virtues, yet they are LUSTS," *Ibid.* p. 81. Now the question plainly is, whether *Lust can be a proper respect to Christ in the heart?* And, whether a *profession* which implies *no more* in it, be equally honorable to Christ, as a credible profession of a *gracious* respect to him?

SECTION VI.

Concerning visibility, without apparent probability.

Mr. Stoddard (*Appeal* p. 16) says thus: "Such persons as the apostles did admit into gospel churches, are fit to be admitted into them; but they admitted *many* that had not a thorough work of regeneration. Indeed by the *rule* that God has given for admissions, if carefully attended, *more* unconverted persons will be admitted than converted."

This passage I took notice of in my book, where I say, "I would humbly inquire, how those visible qualifications can be the ground of a rational judgment, that a person is circumcised in heart, which nevertheless at the same time, we are sensible, are so far from being probable signs of it, that they are more frequently without it than with it," &c. This seems to be a terrible thing in Mr. Williams's way, which he strikes at from time to time; and is an impediment he boggles at exceedingly. One while he pretends, he can give a sufficient answer, p. 7, 8. At another time he pretends, that I remove the difficulty myself, p. 12. Then again, in the same page he pretends to solve the difficulty; and then in the next page pretends, that if the case be as I say, "That we cannot form a rational judgment that a thing is, which at the same time, and under that degree of light we then stand in, it is more probable is a mistaken one, than not," yet it can argue nothing to the case; seeing the judgment we do form, is directed by a rule which is appointed for us. But still, as if not satisfied with these answers and remarks, he seems afterwards to suggest

that Mr. Stoddard did not express this as *his own* sentiment, but as Mr. Cotton's, as a gentleman of the same principles with Mr. Mather, using it as *argumentum ad hominem*. See p. 33.

In p. 34, he expressly says, "Mr. Stoddard does not say, that when the rule which God has given for admissions is carefully attended, it leaves reason to believe, that the greater part of those who are admitted, are *enemies to God*, &c." [True, he does not say this in terms; but he says, "More *unconverted* persons will be admitted than converted;" which is equivalent.] And in p. 133, Mr. Williams presumes confidently to affirm, that "Mr. Stoddard says this [the thing forementioned] not with peculiar relation to his own scheme, but only as an application of a saying of Mr. Cotton's, who was of a different opinion, and said upon a different scheme; to show that upon their own principles, the matter will not be mended." But this is contrary to the most plain fact. For Mr. Stoddard having said, "The apostles admitted many *unconverted*," he immediately adds the passage in dispute, "Indeed by the rule," &c., plainly expressing his own sentiment; though he *backs* it with a saying of Mr. Cotton. So Mr. Cotton's words come in as a confirmation of Mr. Stoddard's; and not Mr. Stoddard's as an *application* of Mr. Cotton's. However, Mr. Williams delivers the same sentiments *as his own*, once and again in his book: he delivers it as his own sentiment, p, 34, "That probably many more hypocrites, than real saints, do make such a profession, as that which must be accepted." He delivers it as his own sentiment, p. 61, That "the apostles judged it likely, that of the Christians taken into the church under their direction, as many were hypocrites in proportion to their number, as of those that were taken into the Jewish church." And as to the latter, he delivers it as his sentiment, p. 24, That "the body of the people were not regenerate." So that, according to his own sentiments, when the Apostolic rule of taking in is observed, the body of those who are admitted will be hypocrites.

Now therefore I desire that this matter may be examined to the very bottom. And here let it be considered, whether the truth of the following things are not incontestable.

1. If indeed by the rule God has given for admissions, when it is carefully attended, more unconverted persons will be admitted than converted; then it will follow, that just such a visibility, or visible appearance of saintship as the *rule requires*, is more frequently *without* real saintship than *with* it.

2. If Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams had just reason from the holy Scripture, and divine Providence to think thus, and to publish such a sentiment, and the Christian church has good reason to believe them; then God has given the Christian church in its present state (dark and imperfect as it is) good reason to *think so* too

3. If Christ, by the rule he has given for admissions, requires his churches to receive such a visibility or appearance, which he has given the same churches, at the same time, reason to judge to be an appearance, that *for the most part* is without godliness, or more frequently connected with ungodliness; then he requires them to receive such an appearance, as he at the same time has given them reason to think does not imply a *probability* of godliness, but is attended rather with a probability of ungodliness. For that is the notion of probability: *an appearance, which, so far as we have means to judge, is for the most part connected with the thing.** Therefore the sign or appearance, let it be what it

* Mr. Locke thus defines *probability* (*Hum. Und.* 7th edit. 8vo. vol. 2, p. 273): "Probability is nothing but the appearance of such an agreement or disagreement, by the intervention of proofs, whose connection is not constant and immutable, or at least is not perceived to be so; but is, or appears FOR THE MOST PART to be so: and is enough to induce the mind to judge the proposition to be true, or false, rather than the contrary."

will, implies a *probability* of that, which we have reason to think it is for the *most part* connected or attended with. Where there is only probability without certainty, there is a *peradventure* in the case on both sides; or in vulgar language, the supposition on each side stands a chance to be true. But that side which most commonly proves true in such a case, stands the best chance; and therefore properly on that side lies the *probability*.

4. That cannot be a *credible* visibility or appearance, which is not a *probable* appearance. To say a thing is *credible* and not *probable*, is a contradiction.

And it is impossible rationally to judge a thing true, and at the same time rationally to judge a thing most probably not true. Therefore it is absurd (not to say worse) to talk of any *divine institution* thus to judge. It would be to suppose, that God by his institution has made that judgment rational, which he at the same time makes improbable, and therefore irrational.

This notion of admitting members into the church of Christ without and against *probability* of true piety, is not only very inconsistent with itself, but very inconsistent with what the common light of mankind teaches in their dealings one with another. Common sense teaches all mankind, in admission of members into societies, at least societies formed for very great and important purposes, to admit none but those concerning whom there is an *apparent probability*, that they are the hearty friends of the society, and of the main designs and interests of it; and especially not to admit such, concerning whom there is a greater probability of their being habitual, fixed enemies. But thus it is according to Mr. Stoddard's and Mr. Williams 's doctrine, as well as the doctrine of the Scripture, with all *unsanctified* men in regard to the church of Christ: they are enemies to the head of the society, enemies to his honor and authority, and the work of salvation in the way of the gospel; the upholding and promoting of which is the main design of the society. The church is represented in Scripture as the *household of God*, that are in a peculiar manner intrusted with the care of his name and honor in the world, the interests of his kingdom, the care of his jewels and most precious things: and would not common sense teach an earthly prince not to admit into his *household*, such as he had no reason to look upon so much as *probable* friends and loyal subjects in their hearts; but rather friends and slaves in their hearts to his enemies, and competitors for his crown and dignity? The visible church of Christ is often represented as his *city* and his *army*. Now would not common sense teach the inhabitants of a besieged city to open the gates to none, but those concerning whom there is at least an *apparent probability* of their not being enemies? And would any imagine, that in a militant state of things it is a likely way to promote the interest of the war, to fill up the army with such as are more likely to be on the enemy's side in their hearts, than on the side of their lawful and rightful prince, as his faithful soldiers and subjects?

SECTION VII.

Concerning the Lord's Supper being a converting ordinance.

Though Mr. Williams holds, that none are to be admitted to the Lord's supper, but such as make a credible pretence or profession of *real godliness*

And Mr. Williams himself, p 139, says, "'Tis *moral evidence* of gospel sincerity, which God's word makes the church's rule," &c. Now, does such an appearance, as we have reason at the same time to think is *more frequently* without gospel holiness than with it, amount to moral evidence of gospel sincerity?

and are to be admitted under that *notion*, and with respect to such a character appearing on them; yet he holds at the same time, that the Lord's supper is a *converting ordinance*, an ordinance designed for the bringing of some men that have not such a character, to be of such a character, p. 14, 15, 35, 83, 100, 101, 126, 127. It is evident that the meaning of those divines who speak of the Lord's supper as a converting ordinance, is not merely that God in his sovereign providence will use it as an *occasion* of the conversion of some; but that it is a converting *means by his institution given to men*, appointing them to use it for this purpose. Thus Mr. Stoddard expressly declares, "That the Lord's supper is INSTITUTED to be a means of regeneration (*Doct. of Inst. Churches*, p. 22). INSTITUTED for the conversion of sinners, as well as the confirmation of saints, *Appeal*, p. 70, 71. That the direct end of it is conversion, when the subject that it is administered unto stands in need of conversion," *Ibid.* p. 73, 74. And thus Mr. Williams, after Mr. Stoddard, speaks of the Lord's supper "as by Christ's APPOINTMENT a proper means of the conversion" of some that are unconverted, p. 100, 101. So he speaks of it as *instituted* for the conversion of sinners, through p. 126 and 127.

Now if so, what need of men's being to rational charity converted already, in order to their coming to the Lord's supper? Is it reasonable to suppose God would *institute* this ordinance *directly for that end*, that sinners might be *converted* by it; and then charge his ministers and churches not to admit any that they had not reasonable ground to think were converted *already?* Mr. Williams, in p. 83, supposes two ends of Christ's appointing the communion of the Christian church; "that such as have grace already should be under proper advantages to gain more, and that those who have none, should be under proper advantages to attain grace." But this ill consists with other parts of his scheme. If a king should erect a *hospital* for the help of the poor, and therein has two ends; *one*, the nourishing of such as are in health, and the *other*, the healing of the sick; and furnishes the hospital accordingly, with proper food for the healthy, and proper remedies for the sick: but at the same time charges the officers, to whom he commits the care of the hospital, by no means to admit any, unless it be under a *notion* of their being in health, and *from respect to such a qualification in them*, and unless they have *reasonable ground, and moral evidence*, to induce them to believe that they are well. And if this pretence should be made to justify such a conduct, that the hospital was indeed designed for the healing of the sick, yet it was designed to confer this benefit only on such diseased people as were *hypocrites*, and made a *profession and pretence* of being in health; will any man presume to say, that such a conduct is agreeable to the dictates of the understanding of rational beings? And to suppose, that such should be the conduct of the infinitely wise GOD, is as unscriptural, as it is unreasonable. We often read in God's word, of men's being convinced of their wickedness and confessing their sins, as a way to be healed and cleansed from sin. But where do we read of men's pretending to more goodness than they have, and making a hypocritical profession and show of goodness, in order to their becoming good men?* Where have we a divine institution, that any who are *wolves* should put on *sheep's clothing*, and so come to his people, that

* Mr. Williams, p. 42, owns, that persons must make a "profession wherein they make a show of being wise virgins," in order to come into the visible Church. And, p. 35, he owns, that "all visible saints who are not truly pious, are hypocrites." Again, it may be observed, he abundantly insists, that men who have no more than common grace and moral sincerity, may lawfully come to sacraments; and yet by what he says, p. 35, they must profess more. So that men who have no more must profess more, and this, it seems, according to divine institution! Again he says, p. 35, that one end God designed by appointing men to be brought into the Church is, that through divine grace, they might effectually be

they may believe them to be *sheep*, and under *this notion* receive them into the flock, to the end that they may truly become *of his sheep?*

But to examine this matter, of the Lord's supper being a converting ordinance to ungodly men professing godliness, a little more exactly. If Christ has appointed the Lord's supper to be a converting ordinance to some such as these, then he has appointed it either only for such of them as are *mistaken*, and think themselves *godly* when they are not; or he has appointed it not only for such, but also for such as are *sensible they are ungodly.*

If the former, if it be appointed as a converting ordinance only for such as are *mistaken*, and think themselves godly, or converted; then here is an institution of Christ, which never can, in any one instance, be made use of to the end for which he has appointed men to use it. It cannot be made use of for this end by *those who admit members*, and administer the ordinance. For they, as Mr. Williams says, must admit none but such as they are bound by the rule of Christ to look upon as godly men already, and to administer the sacrament to them *under that notion, and with respect to such a character.* Neither can it be made use of to such a purpose by any of the *communicants.* For by the supposition, they must be all such as think they are converted already, and also come *under that notion.* So that by this scheme of things, here is an institution appointed to be upheld and used in the church, which the institution itself makes void and impossible. For, as was observed before, the notion of a converting ordinance has not a reference to any secret decree of God, how he in his sovereign pleasure *will sometimes use it.* But to his institution given to men, appointing the end for which *they should use it.* Therefore, on the present supposition, the institution appoints the Lord's supper to be used in some cases for the conversion of sinners, but at the same time forbids its being either given or received under any other notion than that of the communicant's being converted already: which is in effect to forbid its being either given or received for the conversion of the communicant, in any one instance. So that the institution effectually destroys and disannuls itself. But God forbid, that we should ascribe any such inconsistent institutions to the divine Head of the church!

Or if the other part of the disjunction be taken, and it be said, the Lord's supper is appointed for the conversion of some *that are sensible that they are ungodly* or *unconverted*, the consequence is no less absurd, on Mr. Williams's principles. For then the scheme is this. The institution requires some men to make a pretence of *real piety*, and to make a public, solemn profession of *gospel holiness*, which at the same time they are *sensible* they have none of; and this, to the end that others may look upon them to be *real saints* and receive them to the Lord's supper *under that notion.* Not putting on a disguise, and making a show of what they have not, through mistake, but doing it consciously and wilfully, to the honor and glory of God. And all this strictly required of them, as the *instituted means* of their becoming real saints, and the children of God.

Mr. Williams says, p. 14, "Since it is God's will, that his church should admit all such visible saints (viz., such as he had been speaking of), it follows that the Lord's supper is a converting ordinance to such of them as are *unconverted.*" But Mr. Williams is mistaken as to his consequence. The Lord's supper is not instituted to be a converting ordinance to all unconverted men, whom it is God's will the church should admit. For it may be the church' duty, and so God's will, to admit those that live *secretly* in the grossest wicked-

brought to Christ, "to give him the whole possession of their hearts;" and yet in the very next paragraph, p. 35 and 36, he speaks of it as unlawful for men to come to sacraments till they "give up all their hearts to Christ."

ness, as adultery, buggery, deism, &c. Such men as these may make a fair profession, and the church may be ignorant of their secret wickedness, and therefore may have no warrant to reject them: but yet it will not follow, that God by his institution has given *such* a lawful right to the Lord's supper, having appointed it to be a *converting* ordinance to them.

SECTION VIII.

The Notion of moral Sincerity's being the Qualification which gives a lawful Right to Christian Sacraments, examined.

Though our author disdains the imputation of any such notion, as that of men's being called visible and professed saints from respect to a visibility and profession of *moral sincerity:* yet it is manifest, that in his scheme (whether consistently or no, others must judge) *moral sincerity* is the qualification which entitles, and gives a lawful right, to sacraments. For he holds, that it is lawful for unsanctified men who have this qualification, to come to sacraments; and that it is not lawful for them to come without it. Therefore I desire this notion may be thoroughly examined.

And for the greater clearness, let it be observed what *sincerity* in general is. Now *sincerity*, in the general notion of it, is *an honest conformity of some profession or outward show of some inward property or act of mind, to the truth and reality of it.* If there be show or pretence of what *is not*, and has *no real existence*, then the pretence is altogether vain; it is only a pretence, and nothing else: and therefore is a pretence or show without any *sincerity*, of any kind, either moral or gracious.

I now proceed to offer the following arguments against the notion of *moral sincerity's* being the qualification, which gives a lawful right to sacraments.

I. There is no such thing as moral sincerity, in the *covenant of grace*, distinct from gracious sincerity. If any sincerity at all be requisite in order to a title to the seals of the covenant of grace, doubtless it is the sincerity which belongs to that covenant. But there is only one sort of sincerity which belongs to that covenant; and that is a gracious sincerity: the covenant of grace has nothing to do with any other sincerity. There is but one sort of faith belonging to that covenant; and this is saving faith in Jesus Christ, called in Scripture *unfeigned faith.* As for the faith of devils, it is not the faith of the covenant of grace.

Here the distinction of an *internal*, and *external* covenant, will not help at all; as long as the covenant, of which the sacraments are seals, is a *covenant of salvation*, or a covenant proposing terms of eternal salvation. The sacraments are seals of such a covenant: they are seals of the *New Testament in Christ's blood*, Matt. xxvi. 28, Luke xxii. 28, *a testament which has better promises than the old*, Heb. viii. 6, and which the apostle tells us, "makes us heirs of the eternal inheritance," Heb. ix. 15. Mr. Williams himself speaks of the covenant sealed in baptism, as "the covenant proposing terms of salvation," p. 23. So he speaks of the covenant entered into by a visible people, as the covenant "in which God offers everlasting happiness," p. 24, 25. But there is no other religion, no other sincerity, belonging to this covenant *of salvation*, but that which *accompanies salvation*, or is *saving religion and sincerity.* As it is written, Psal. li. 6, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts."

There is such a thing, as what may be called a *moral sincerity*, in distinc-

tion from saving, in many moral things; as in loving our friends and neighbors, in loving our country, in choosing the Protestant religion before the Popish, in a conscientious care to do many duties, in being willing to take a great deal of pains in religion, in being sorry for the commission of such and such acts of wickedness, &c. But there are some duties, which, unless they are done with a *gracious sincerity*, they cannot be done at all. As Mr. Stoddard observes, *Safety of Ap.* p. 216, "There are some duties which cannot be done but from a gracious respect to God." Thus there is but one sort of sincerity in loving God as God, and setting our hearts on him as our highest happiness, loving him above the world, and loving holiness above all the objects of our lusts. He that does not do these things with a gracious sincerity, never really doth them at all: he that truly does them, is certainly a godly man; as we are abundantly assured by the word of God. So, there is but one sort of *sincere and cordial consent to the covenant of grace*, but one sort of *giving all our hearts to Jesus Christ;* which things Mr. Williams allows to be necessary, to come to sacraments. That which a man's heart is full of reigning enmity to, he cannot with any reality at all, cordially consent to and comply with: but the hearts of *unsanctified* men are full of reigning enmity to the covenant of grace, according to the doctrine of Scripture, and according to the doctrine of Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams too, as we have seen before.

However, if there were any such thing, as being heartily willing to accept Christ, and giving all our hearts to Christ, without a saving sincerity, this would not be a complying with the terms of a covenant salvation. For it is self-evident, that it is only something which is *saving*, that is a compliance with the terms of *salvation*. Now Mr. Williams himself often allows (as has been observed) that persons must comply with the terms of the covenant of grace, in order to come to sacraments. Yet because he also in effect denies it, I shall say something further in confirmation of it.

(1.) The sacraments are *covenant privileges*. Mr. Williams calls them so, p. 5. Covenant privileges are covenant benefits, or benefits persons have a right to by the covenant. But persons can have no right to any of the *benefits* of a covenant, without compliance with its *terms*. For that is the very notion of the terms of a covenant, viz., terms of an interest in the benefits of that covenant. It is so in all covenants whatsoever; if a man refuses to comply with the conditions of the covenant, he can claim nothing by that covenant.

(2.) If we consider the sacraments as *seals* of the covenant, the same thing is evident, viz., that a man can have no right to them without a compliance with the terms. The sacraments are not only seals of the offer on God's part, or ordinances God has appointed as confirmations of the truth of his covenant, as Mr. Williams seems to insist, p. 74, 75. For considered merely as seals and confirmations of the truth of the gospel, they are (as miracles and other evidences of the Christian religion) seals equally given to *Christians, Jews, Deists*, moral and vicious, and the whole world that knows of them. Whereas, it is manifest, in the nature of the thing, sacraments are seals of the covenant *to be applied to the communicant*, and of which he is the immediate subject, in a peculiar manner, *as a party in covenant*. Otherwise what need would there be of his being one of God's *covenant people*, in any sense whatsoever?

But now it is not reasonable to suppose, that the seal of the covenant belongs to any man, *as a party in the covenant*, who will not accept of and comply with the covenant. He that rejects the covenant, and will not comply with it, has no interest in it: and he that has no interest in the covenant, has no right to the seals: for the covenant and its seals go together. It is so in all covenants among

mankind; after a man has come into a bargain proposed and offered by another yielding to the terms of it, he has a right to have the bargain *sealed* and confirmed to him as a *party in the covenant;* but not before.

And if what the communicant does, be a seal on his part also, as the nature of the thing demonstrates, seeing he is active in the matter, and as Mr. Williams seems willing to allow, p. 75, it will follow, with equal evidence, that a man cannot lawfully partake, unless he yields to, and complies with the covenant. To what purpose is a man's sealing an instrument or contract, but to confirm it *as his own act and deed*, and to declare his compliance with his part of the contract. As when a servant seals his indenture, it is a testimony and ratification of his compliance to the proposed contract with his master. And if a covenant of friendship be proposed between two parties, and they both put their seal to it, hereby they both testify and declare their mutual friendship.

It has been already observed, that unsanctified men, while such, cannot, with any sincerity at all, testify a *present* cordial compliance with the covenant of grace: and as they cannot do this, so neither can they with any sincerity promise a *future* compliance with that covenant. Mr. Williams often allows, that in order to Christian communion men must *promise* a compliance with the covenant, in its spiritual and saving duties; that they *will believe and repent in the sense of the covenant*, willingly accept of Christ and his salvation, love him and live to him, and will do it "immediately, henceforward, from this moment," p. 25, 26, 28 and 76. But how absurd is this! When at the same instant, while they are making and uttering these promises, they are entirely *averse* to any such thing; being "then enemies to Christ, willingly rejecting him, opposing his salvation, striving against it, laboring to find out all manner of difficulties and hinderances in the way of it, not desiring it should come yet," &c., which our author, in a place forecited, says is the case with *all unsanctified* men.

And when unsanctified men promise, that they will spend the rest of their lives in universal *obedience* to Christ, there is no sincerity in such promises; because there is not *such a heart* in them. There is no man but a true disciple of Christ, that is willing thoroughly to *deny himself* for him, and follow him in a way of obedience to all his commands, unto the end, through all difficulties which Christ has given his followers reason to expect, or commanded them to prepare for; as is evident by Christ's frequent declarations, Luke xiv. 25—33, Matt. x. 37, 38, 39, chap. xiii. 44, 45, 46, and many parallel places. If an unsanctified man thinks he is willing, he does not know his own heart: if he professes to be willing, he does not know what he says. The difficulty and cost of it is not in his view; and therefore he has no proper willingness to comply with the cost and difficulty. That which he is willing for, with a moral sincerity, is something else that he conceives of, which is a great deal easier, and less cross to flesh and blood. If a king should propose to a subject his building him such a tower, promising him a certain reward. If the subject should undertake it, *not counting the cost*, thinking with himself that the king meant another sort of tower, much cheaper; and should be willing only to build that cheap one, which he imagined in his own mind; when he would by no means have consented to build so costly a tower as the king proposed, if he had understood him right: such a man could not be said properly to be willing to comply with his prince's proposal, with any sincerity at all. For what he consents to with a moral sincerity, is *not the thing* which the king proposed.

The promises of unsanctified men are like the promises of the man we read of, Luke ix. 57, 58, who said, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou

goest." To whom Christ replied, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." When he made his promise, he probably quite mistook the thing, and did not imagine, that to follow Christ wherever he went, would be to follow him in such poverty and hardship. I suppose the rich *young man* we read of, Mark x. 17, &c. might have what is called *moral sincerity*. But he had no sincerity in *the covenant of grace*. When he came to Christ to know *what he should do to have eternal life*, it is probable he ignorantly thought himself willing to yield himself to Christ's direction. Yet when it came to a trial, and Christ told him he must *go and sell all that he had and give to the poor*, it proved that he had no sincerity of willingness at all for any such thing. So that it is evident, however unsanctified men may be morally sincere in some things, yet they have no sincerity of any sort in *that covenant*, of which the sacraments are seals; and that moral sincerity, distinct from gracious, in *this covenant*, is mere imagination there being indeed no such thing.

II. Another argument against this notion of moral sincerity's giving a right to church communion, is this: a quality that is *transient* and *vanishing*, can be no qualification or fitness for a *standing* privilege. Unsanctified men may be very serious, greatly affected, and much engaged in religion: but the Scripture compares their religion to a *lamp* not supplied with *oil*, which will go out, and to a *plant* that has *no root* nor *deepness of earth*, which will soon wither; and compares such unsanctified men to the *dog* that will *return to his vomit*, and to the *sow*, which, though washed ever so clean, yet, her nature not being changed, will *return to her wallowing in the mire*.

Mr. Williams allows, that persons in order to come to sacraments must have "deep convictions, an earnest concern to obtain salvation," &c. Now every one who is in any degree acquainted with religious matters, knows that such convictions are not wont to last a great while, if they have no saving issue. Mr. Stoddard, in his sermon on the danger of speedy degeneracy, p. 11, says, "unconverted men *will grow weary* of religious duties." And our author himself, p. 78, speaking of those professors in the primitive churches, that fell away to heresy and other wickedness, takes notice that the apostle observes, "IT WILL BE SO—that they which are approved, might be made manifest:" and says Mr. Williams upon it, "evil and unsanctified men, by such sins, will discover their hypocrisy."

Now seeing this is the case with moral sincerity and common religion, how can it be a qualification for a standing privilege? Nothing can be a fitness for a *durable privilege* but a *durable qualification*. For no qualification has any fitness or adaptedness for more than it extends to: as a short scabbard cannot be fit for a long sword. If a man, going a journey in the night, needs a lamp to light him in his way, who will pretend that a flaming wick without oil, which will last but a few rods, is fit for his purpose? Or if a man were building a house for himself and family, should he put into the frame pieces of timber known to be of such a nature as that they would probably be rotten in a few months; or should he take blocks of ice instead of hewn stone, because during a present cold season they appeared to be hard and firm; and withal should for a covering put only leaves that will soon fade away, instead of tiles or shingles, that are solid and lasting; would not every spectator ridicule his folly?

If it should be said that unsanctified men, when they *lose* their moral sincerity, may be *cast out* again: this is far from helping the case, or showing that such men were ever *fit* to be admitted. To say, a piece of timber, though not

of a durable nature, is *fit* to be put into the frame of a building, because when it begins to rot it may be pulled out again, is so far from proving that it was ever fit to be put in, that the speedy necessity of pulling it out rather proves the contrary. If we had the power of constituting a human body, or it were left to us to add members to our own bodies, as there might be occasion; we should not think such a member was fit to be added to the frame, that had already radically seated in it a cancer or gangrene, by which it could last but a little while itself, and would endanger the other members; though it were true, that when the disease should prevail, there were surgeons who might be procured to cut that member off.

But to consider a little further this point of *moral sincerity's* qualifying persons for the privileges of the church, I would lay down this proposition as a thing of clear evidence: *Those persons have no fitness in themselves to come to the privileges of the church, who, if they were known, would not be fit to be admitted by others.* For to say, they are *fit* to be members, and yet *not* fit to be allowed to be members, is apparently absurd. But they who have no better fitness than moral sincerity, if that were *known*, would not be fit to be admitted by others; as is allowed by Mr. Williams. For he holds, that in order to be fit to be admitted by others, they must credibly appear to them to have something more than moral sincerity, even gospel holiness. And it is evident in itself, as well as allowed by Mr. Williams, that if such were *known*, they would not be *fit* to be admitted, *only* on their moral sincerity, and the profession and promises they make from such a principle: and that for this reason, because such a principle alone *would not be fit to be trusted.* God himself has taught his church, that the religion of unsanctified men is not fit to be trusted; as a lamp without *oil*, and a plant without *root*, are things not to be trusted. God has directly taught his church to expect, that such a religion will fail; and that such men, having no higher principle, will return to their wickedness. Job xxvii. 8, 9, 10, "The hypocrite—will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" Dan. xii. 10, "The wicked will do wickedly." And therefore God does not require his church to accept their profession and promises. If he has taught us not to credit their profession and promises, then certainly he has taught us not to accept them.

III. Another argument against this supposed rule of allowing and requiring unsanctified men with moral sincerity, to come to sacraments, is this. *That rule*, which if fully attended, would naturally bring it to pass, that the *greater part* of communicants would be *unfit*, even according to that very rule, cannot be a divine rule: but this supposed rule of moral sincerity is such a rule. For if this rule be universally attended, then all unsanctified men, who have present convictions of conscience sufficient to make them morally sincere, must come into the communion of the church. But this conviction and common religion, if it does not issue in conversion (as has been observed), commonly vanishes away in a short time: and yet still these persons, if not convicted of open scandal, are left in the communion of the church, and remain there, *without even moral sincerity.* Experience gives abundant reason to think, that of those who some time or other have considerable convictions of conscience, so as to make them for the present to be what is called *morally sincere*, but few are savingly converted.* And if all these must be admitted (as they must, if this rule be fully attended), then their convictions going away and their sincerity vanishing

* How small a proportion are there of the vast multitudes, that in the time of the late religious commotion through the land had their consciences awakened, who gave hopeful abiding evidences of a saving conversion to God!

with it, it will hereby be brought about, that the Lord's table is chiefly surrounded with the worst sort of morally insincere persons, viz., stupid backsliders, that are in themselves far worse than they were before, according to the Scripture account, Matt. xii. 45, and 2 Pet. ii. 20. And this as the natural consequence of the forementioned rule, appointing *moral sincerity* to be the qualifications for communion. Thus this supposed rule supplants its own design.

IV. Another argument that moral sincerity is not the qualification to which God has annexed a lawful right to sacraments, is, that this qualification is *not at all inconsistent* with a man's living at the same time in the most *heinous wickedness*, in a superlative degree contrary to the Christian religion.

It was before observed to be a thing evident in itself, and allowed by Mr. Williams, that there are some sins, which while wilfully continued and lived in, though secretly, do wholly disqualify persons for Christian sacraments, and make it *unlawful* for men to partake of them.

Now if it be thus with some sins, doubtless it is because of the heinousness of those sins, the high degree of wickedness which is in them. And hence it will follow, that those sins which are in themselves most heinous, and most contrary to the Christian religion, do especially disqualify persons for Christian sacraments, when wilfully lived in.

Let it therefore now be considered, whether it will not follow from these premises, that for men to live in enmity against God and Christ, and in wilful unbelief and rejection of Christ (as the Scriptures teach, and as Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams too assert, is the case with all unsanctified men under the gospel), wholly *disqualifies* men for Christian sacraments. For it is very manifest by Scripture and reason, that to live in these things is to live in some of the most heinous kinds of wickedness; as is allowed by Calvinistic divines in general, and by Mr. Stoddard in particular, who says, *Saf. of Ap.* p. 224, "You cannot anger God more by any thing, than by continuing in the neglect of Christ This is the great controversy God has with sinners; not that they have been guilty of these and those particular transgressions, but that they abide in the rejection of the gospel." Again he says, *Ibid.* p. 249, "The great sin, that God is angry with you for, is your unbelief. Despising the gospel is the great provoking sin."

A man's continuing in hatred of his brother, especially a fellow communicant, is generally allowed to be a thing that disqualifies for communion. The apostle compares it to leaven in the passover, 1 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8. But now certainly it is as bad, and as contrary to the nature and design of Christian sacraments, for a man to live in hatred of CHRIST, and to remain a *hateful and accursed enemy* (if I may use Mr. Williams's own language) to the glorious Redeemer and head of the Christian church.

None will deny that *lying* and *perjury* are very gross and heinous sins, and (if known) very scandalous; and therefore it follows from what was observed before, that such sins, if lived in, though secretly, do disqualify persons for Christian sacraments in God's sight. But by our author's own account, all unsanctified men that partake of the Lord's supper, live in *lying* and *perjury*, and go on to renew these crimes continually; inasmuch as while they continue ungodly men, they live in a constant violation of their promise and oath. For Mr. Williams often lays it down, that all who enter into covenant with God, do promise spiritual duties, such as repentance, faith, love, &c. And that they promise to perform these *henceforward*, even from the *present moment*, unto the *end of life*; see p. 25, 26, 28, 76. And that they do not only promise, but *swear* to do this, p. 18, 100. 101, 129, 130, 140. But for a man to vio-

late the promises he makes in covenanting with God, Mr. Williams once and again speaks of it as *lying*, p. 24, 130. And if so, doubtless their breaking the oath they swear to God, is *perjury*. Now lying to *men* is bad; but lying to God is worse, Acts v. 4. And without doubt perjury towards God is the *worst* sort of perjury. But if unsanctified men, when they entered into covenant with God, promised and swore, that they would *immediately* and *henceforward* accept of Christ as their Saviour, and love him, and live to him; then while they continue in a wilful rejection of him (which according to Mr. Williams all unregenerate men do) they live continually in the violation of their promise and oath.*

I would observe one thing further under this head, viz., that ungodly men who live under the gospel, notwithstanding any moral sincerity they may have, *are worse, and more provoking enemies of God, than the very heathen*, who never sinned against gospel light and mercy. This is very manifest by the Scriptures, particularly Matt. x. 13, 14, Amos iii. 2, Rom. ii. 9, 2 Pet. ii 21, Rev. iii. 15, 16.

I having suggested concerning Mr. Stoddard's doctrine of admitting *more* unconverted than converted, by attending Christ's rule, that this supposes it to be the case of the members of the visible church, that the greater part of them are more provoking enemies to God than most of the heathen; Mr. Williams represents himself as greatly alarmed at this. He calls it an extraordinary passage, and puts five questions about it to my serious consideration, p. 72, 73. The first and chief question is this: "Did Mr. Stoddard ever say in the *Appeal*, or anywhere else, of most of our fellow-worshippers at the sacrament, that we have no reason to think concerning them, but that they are more provoking enemies to the Lord, whom Christians love and adore, than most of the very *Heathen?*" His three next questions are to represent the heinousness of such supposed ill treatment of Mr. Stoddard, and I think will be sufficiently answered, by what I shall offer in reply to the first.

I will tell him what Mr. Stoddard said. Speaking to such as do not come to Christ, living under the gospel, he said, *Safety of Ap.* p. 234, 235, "You may not think to escape as the *heathen* do. Your load will be heavier and your fire will be hotter, and your judgment sorer, than the judgment of other

* Here I would observe, that not only in the general do unsanctified men, notwithstanding their moral sincerity, thus live in the most heinous wickedness; but particularly, according to Mr. Williams's own doctrine, their very attendance on the outward ordinances and duties of *worship* is the *vilest, most flagrant, and abominable impiety*. In his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 77, 78, he says, "If a man could perform all the outward acts of worship and obedience, which the Bible requires, from the beginning to the end of it, and not do them from *faith in Christ, and love to God*, and not express by them the thoughts, desires, and actings of his soul; they would be so far from being that obedience which Christ requires, that they would be a *mocking of God, and hateful to him*. These outward acts ought to be no other, and in religion are designed to stand for nothing else but to be representations of a man's soul, and the acts of that. And when they are not so they are in their own nature a LIE, and false pretence of something within, which is not there. Therefore the Lord abhors them, and reckons these false pretences the *vilest wickedness*. Now when a man performs all outward obedience and worship, but it does not come from his *heart*, he practically denies the omniscience of Christ, while he puts before him a show and pretence of something for the reality; and so he belies his own profession. And all this, be it more or less, whatever it pretends to be of religion, instead of being that which Christ requires, is entirely different from it, yea, *infinitely contrary to it*. And those same actions, which when they are in the language of the *heart*, and flow from it, are *pleasing and acceptable* to God and Jesus Christ, are true obedience to him; when they do *not*, are reckoned the MOST FLAGRANT AND ABOMINABLE IMPIETY, and threatened with the SEVEREST DAMNATION OF HELL." Now, who can believe, that God has, by his own holy institution, made that sort of sincerity, which is nothing better than what is consistent with such a *lying, vile, abominable, flagrantly wicked pretence and show of religion as this*, the very thing that gives a right, even in his sight, to Christian sacraments!

I might here also observe, that if moral sincerity or common grace gives a right to sacraments in the sight of God, then that which (according to Mr. Stoddard's doctrine before observed) is a *spirit of lust*, that which is *contrary to, and at war with, and would destroy saving grace*, is the thing which gives a right, in the sight of God, to Christian sacraments.

men. God will proportion every man's misery to his iniquity. And as you have enjoyed greater light and love, so you must expect more amazing and exquisite wrath, than other men. Conscience has more to accuse you of and condemn you for, and so has God. And you will sink down deeper into hell, than other men. You are treasuring up a greater measure of wrath, than others, against the day of wrath. You will wish you had lived in the *darkest* corners of the earth among Scythians and Barbarians."

And Mr. Williams must allow me to remind him of what another divine has said, and that is himself. In his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11, p. 25, 26, he says, "It is to be feared, there are great numbers here present, that are in an *unconverted, unrenewed, unpardoned state;* strangers from God, and enemies to him. Yet you now look with great pity and compassion on that poor *captive*, for whom we have now been offering up our earnest prayers,* who has been so long in so pitiable and sorrowful a condition, and who is now in the thickness of *popish* darkness and superstition. If you are out of Christ, and destitute of true faith in him, if your natures remain *unrenewed and unsanctified*, what is your state better than hers, which looks so sorrowful and distressing? Rather, is it not *worse?* When you consider, that in the fulness of the means of grace which you have enjoyed all your days, you are as far from any saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, as those who have lived in the dregs and abyss of *popish* ignorance, and know not what to believe, but what the church, that is, *Antichrist*, tells them. If you die thus, your misery will be *aggravated* INCONCEIVABLY beyond theirs. Which Christ has plainly enough shown us, when he upbraided the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, and tells them how much in the comparison they fall below Tyre and Sidon (heathen cities, notorious for luxury, debauchery, and the grossest idolatry), "and Sodom; for whom it should be *more tolerable*, than for them."

The same author says also, even in the book under consideration, p. 86, "That the unbelief and impieties of *visible saints*, is what they will be punished far *above all men in the world.*"

And now I think it may be proper for Mr. Williams himself to answer his 5th question, which he puts to my serious consideration, "What honor is it to our Lord Jesus Christ, to treat visible saints in such a manner, when at the same time it is his revealed will they should be outwardly treated as visible saints?"

SECTION IX

A View of what Mr. Williams says concerning the public Covenanting of Professors.

I. Mr. Williams, often speaks with contempt, of my supposing it to be a duty required of such as come to sacraments, that they should *explicitly own the covenant*, and disputes largely against it, p. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and many other places. He says concerning me, p. 22, "It is very unhappy, that this good gentleman should use the Scripture in such a manner, to prove a divine institution which never had an existence; and after all that is said, is but a mere imagination and chimera; it being evident, there never was any such divine institution for the church under the Old Testament, binding particular

* Mrs. Eunice Williams, brought up in Canada, among the Caghnawaga Indians, sister to the then pastor of the church in Mansfield, where this sermon was preached, upon a day of prayer kept on her account; she being then in that place on a visit.

persons *publicly and explicitly to own the covenant*, in order to their enjoying the outward ordinances of it." However it falls out something happily for me, that I am not quite alone in this chimera, but have Mr. Williams himself to join me in it; who abundantly asserts the same thing, p. 5, 8, 9, and many other places, who *uses the Scripture in* the same *manner*, and supposes the same *divine institution;* and who, in p. 5 of the treatise in hand, having stated the following inquiry, "What is that evidence, which by DIVINE APPOINTMENT the church is to have, of the saintship of those who are admitted to the outward privileges of the covenant of grace?" makes this answer to it: "The SCRIPTURE has determined the matter thus, that the open profession and declaration of a PERSON'S believing in Christ,—and a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, and engagement on his part to fulfil it," &c., "is the sole and entire ground of that public judgment, which the church is to make of the real saintship of professors." It is manifest, he cannot intend merely that they should be the *posterity* of such as thus owned the covenant, or *declared their consent to it*, and so are looked upon as those that owned the covenant in their ancestors, at the beginning of the covenant line (though sometimes he seems to suppose, this is all that is necessary, as I shall take particular notice by and by): for here he expressly speaks of a *personal* owning the covenant, or the *open profession and declaration of a* PERSON'S consent to the covenant. And thus he often speaks of the same matter in like manner, as a *personal* thing, or what is done by the *person judged of*, and *received*. See p. 10, 31, 32, 33, 34, 73, 84, 139. And in the 2d page of his preface, he declares himself fully established in Mr. Stoddard's doctrine concerning this affair of qualifications for the Lord's supper; who expressly declares it to be his judgment, that "it is requisite that persons be not admitted unto communion in the Lord's supper, without making a PERSONAL and public profession of their faith and repentance," *Appeal*, p. 93, 94.

And as Mr. Williams holds that there must be a *public, personal owning the covenant;* so he also maintains, that this profession must be *explicit*, or *express*. He says, p. 20, "Since we have no direction in the Bible, at what time, nor in what manner any *personal*, *explicit* covenanting should be performed,—it appears plain to a demonstration, that the people knew nothing of any such institution, as I suppose the Christian church never did until Mr. Edwards discovered it." But if I was the first discoverer he should have owned, that since I have discovered it, he himself and all my opposers have seen cause to follow me and receive my discovery. For so the case seems to be, if he gives us a true account (in p. 132), where he rejects, with indignation, the imputation of any other opinion. "How often (says he) has Mr. Edwards said none but visible saints are to be admitted? Do not ALL Mr. Edwards's OPPOSERS say, that NO MAN is to be admitted, who does not profess his hearty belief of the gospel, and the earnest and sincere purpose of his heart, so far as he knows it, to obey all God's commands, and keep his COVENANT? NONE, who do not make as full and EXPRESS a profession as the Israelites did, or was ever required by Christ or his apostles, in any instances that can be produced in the Bible, of bodies of men or particular persons' admission into visible covenant with God?" He had before spoken of *the* words *which the Israelites used in their entering into covenant with God*, p. 5, which must refer to their entering into covenant in the *wilderness;* for we have no account of any *words* at all, used by that nation, *at their entering into covenant*, if not there. And this he sometimes speaks of as the covenant they made, when God *took them into covenant*, p. 8, 36, 37. And p. 20, he allows *that* to be an instance of *explicit* covenanting: but ridicules my pretending to show, that *explicit* covenanting was a divine institution for all:

when he says, we have an account of but four instances of any *explicit* covenanting with God by the Jews, and those on most extraordinary occasions, and by *the body* of the people. But what matter is it, whether there were four, or but two, or only that one instance in the wilderness? When he himself with such earnestness declares, that all my opposers hold, *every man* must make as full and express a profession of the covenant as ever the Israelites did, or was ever required, in any instance that can be produced in the Bible, whether of *bodies of men* or *particular persons'* admission, &c. If this be so, and what he said before be also true, then all Israel, even every individual person among them, that ever was admitted to the privileges of the church, throughout all their generations, by his own confession and assertion, did personally make as *explicit* a profession of the covenant, as the body of the people did in that instance in the wilderness. And not only so, but the same must every individual person do, that ever comes to sacraments, through all ages, to the end of the world. Thus Mr. Williams fights hard to beat down himself. But I will not say in his own language, that in so doing *he fights hard to beat down a poor man of straw.*

If any should say, that Mr. Williams, when speaking of an *express profession*, does not mean a profession in *words*, but only in *actions;* such as an outward attendance on ordinances and duties of worship: I answer, if such actions are a profession, yet certainly they are not an *express* profession; they are no more than an *implicit* profession. And besides, it is very plain, the profession he speaks of is a verbal profession, or a profession in *words*. Thus p. 36, when describing the profession which ought to be made, he says, "It is in as strong WORDS as were used by any whom the apostles admitted." And elsewhere (as was before noted) he often insists, that a profession should be made in words without any discrimination as to their meaning. Which shows, it is a profession in *words* that he designs. And although, p. 104, he speaks of a performance of the outward duties of morality and worship, *as the only way that God ever appointed of making real saintship visible:* yet this is only another instance of his great *inconsistence* with himself; as appears by what has already been observed, and appears further by this, that when he speaks of a profession of consent to the terms of the covenant, &c., he often speaks of it as a profession which ought to be made *in order* to admission to these ordinances, p. 5, 10, 35, 36, 132, and other places. If so, then how can the *attendance* itself, on these ordinances of worship, be all the profession which is to be made? Must men first come to ordinances, in order to admission to ordinances? And moreover, Mr. Williams himself distinguishes between *engaging* and swearing to *keep covenant* in the public profession, and attending on the ordinances and duties of worship, which he speaks of as belonging to the *fulfilment of the engagement and oath*, p. 130. And lastly I would observe, though it could be consistently made out (which it can never be) that Mr. Williams does not mean a professing in *words*, it would be nothing to the purpose. If it be in words, or in other signs which are equivalent to words, and which are a *full and express profession* (as Mr. Williams says), it is exactly the same thing as to my purpose, and the consequence of the argument, which was, that real godliness must be professed. And indeed this very thing which I endeavored to prove by all that I said on this head, is expressly, again and again, allowed by Mr. Williams. Yet he makes a great ado, as if there was a vast difference between him and me in this affair of public covenanting with God; and as though my notion of it were very singular, absurd, and mischievous.

II. Mr. Williams says a great deal in opposition to me, to show that *swear-*

ing by God's name, swearing to the Lord, and the like, does not mean *covenanting with God:* but yet in p. 18, in the midst of his earnest dispute against it he owns it. I mentioned several Scripture prophecies, referring to the *Gentile* converts in the days of the gospel, which foretell that they should *swear by God's name, swear to the Lord of Hosts,* &c., as a prediction of the Gentiles *public covenanting with God;* using that as one thing which confirmed, that this was commonly the meaning of such phrases in the Old Testament. But Mr. Williams despises my interpretation of these prophecies, and my argument from them. Nevertheless, in his reply, he owns the very thing: he in effect owns, that entering into covenant, and owning the covenant is what is meant by these prophecies; mentioning this, plainly with approbation, as the universal sense of Protestant commentators. His words are, p. 18, "As to all these prophecies, which Mr. Edwards has quoted, referring to the Gentiles, and their swearing by the name of the Lord, the sense of Protestant commentators upon them, I think, universally is, that when the Gentiles, in God's appointed time, should be *brought into covenant with God,* it should be as the Jews were, by being persuaded *to consent to the terms of the covenant of grace,* and *engaging themselves to God,* to be faithful to him, and *keep covenant with him.* He who heartily consents to the terms of the covenant of grace, gives up himself to the Lord, *gives the hand to the Lord,* engages to own and serve him: which is the thing signified in all those metaphorical phrases, which describe or point out this event, in the Old Testament language."

Mr. Williams in these last cited words, explains the phrase of *giving the hand to the Lord,* as signifying *engaging themselves to God in covenant,* and *consenting to the terms of the covenant* (as the reader sees) and yet in the next page but two, he contemns and utterly disallows my interpreting the same phrase in the same manner. Mr. Williams says, p. 21, "As to the words of Hezekiah, when he called the Israelites to the passover, bidding them *yield* or *give the hand to the Lord;* and in Ezra, *they gave the hand* to put away their wives; which he thinks to be a Hebrew phrase for entering into covenant, it carries its own confutation with it."

IV. Mr. Williams often speaks of the professions made by the ancient Israelites and Jewish Christians, *when they entered into covenant,* and *were admitted into the Church.* Whereas, according to the doctrine of the same author, in the same book, we have no account of any profession made by either, on any such occasion. For he insists, that the *children* of such as are in covenant, are *born in covenant;* and are not *admitted into covenant* any otherwise than as they were seminally in their ancestors; and that the profession of their ancestors, at the head of the covenant line, is that *individual profession, which brings them into covenant.* His words are, p. 135, 136, "It is one and the same individual profession and engagement, which brings them and their children into covenant. And if there is one instance in the Bible, where God ever took any man into covenant, and not his children at the same time, I should be glad to see it. It is by virtue of their being in covenant, that they have a right to the seals. And if *these* children are not cast out of covenant by God, *their* children have as good a right to the seals as they had. It is God's will, that his mark and seal should be set upon them, AND THEIR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN FOREVER, until God casts them out of covenant. It is certain, they have an interest in the covenant, and they have a right to the privileges of the covenant, so long as they remain in covenant; and that is until God cuts them off, and casts them out."

And accordingly he supposes John the Baptist never inquired into the doc-

trinal knowledge of those he baptized, because they *were already in covenant with God*, and members of his visible church, and not yet turned out: and he suggests, that John knew many of them not to be of a good moral character, p. 98. So he largely insists, that the *three thousand Jews* and proselytes that the apostles baptized, Acts ii., were not taken into covenant, but only *continued in covenant*, p. 46, 47. So he supposes the Eunuch, before Philip baptized him, was a member of the church, and in covenant with God, p. 50. Though he inconsistently mentions those same persons in the 2d of Acts, and the Eunuch, as *admitted into the church* by the apostles, and primitive ministers, p. 9, 10, 59 And so p. 8, 26, he mentions God's *taking all Israel* into covenant: he mentions the *profession* which the Israelites made, p. 25; and p. 5, he speaks of the *words which the Israelites used, in their entering into covenant with God.* And p. 36, 37, he speaks of their profession in Moses's time, *which God trusted so far as to admit them into covenant.* Whereas indeed, according to Mr. Williams, they *were not taken in*, nor did they *enter into covenant*, neither in the plains of Moab, nor at Mount Sinai. He says expressly, that they were in covenant before that time, when in Egypt, being taken in their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, p. 91. But then we read of *no words*, that those patriarchs *used at their entering into covenant.* And it will undoubtedly follow, on Mr. Williams's principles, that we must go further back still for Israel's being taken into covenant; we must even go to Adam himself, the first father of mankind, who was visibly in covenant, and so his posterity, in the line of Noah's ancestors, without the line's being broken by a visible *cutting off*, and casting *out* by God, as we have all reason to suppose. And after the flood, we have reason to think, God had a covenant race continued in Shem's posterity, especially in the line of Abraham's ancestors. And though Terah, Abraham's father, was tainted with the then prevailing idolatry; yet there is no appearance of the line's being then *cut off*, in the way Mr. Williams speaks of, by God's visibly *casting him out.* On the contrary, God took a special, fatherly care of him and his children, in bringing them from Ur of the Chaldees, the land of graven images, to Haran, Gen. xi. 31. And God is called the God of the father of Abraham and Nahor, that is, the God of Terah, Gen. xxxi. 53. And if it be said, that in Abraham began a new dispensation of the covenant; so that Abraham might properly on that account be said to be *taken into covenant*, as though his ancestors had not been taken into covenant: I answer, the alteration of the dispensation was in no measure so great as that after Christ's resurrection and ascension; and yet Mr. Williams will not allow, that the Jewish converts, received in Acts ii., on this new dispensation, were any more than *continued in covenant*, and in the church. So that, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, it must be Adam's profession of religion that was the *individual profession* which made all his posterity, in the line of the church, even to the apostles' days, *visible saints*, or (as he himself explains visible saintship) such as we have rational ground to think are real saints, possessed of gospel holiness, and on that account have a right to sacraments. For so he says it is with the children of them that are in covenant, and their children, and their children *forever*, until cut off and cast out by God.

So that now we have the scheme in a true view of it. The Pharisees and Sadducees that John baptized, whom Mr. Williams supposes John knew to be not of a good moral character, and whose doctrinal knowledge he did not inquire into before he baptized them; because they had before been admitted in their ancestors; even *these* were visible saints, and such as John had rational ground to think had sufficient doctrinal knowledge and were orthodox and real saints,

having moral evidence that they had gospel holiness, because Adam their original ancestor, made a profession of religion, in words of double meaning, without any marks of distinction or discrimination, by which any might know their meaning!

And if we should go back no further than Abraham, it would not much mend the matter; supposing the case had been so, that we had the words of both Abraham's and Adam's profession written down in our Bibles: whereas we have neither; no, nor have we the words of the profession of any one person, either in the Old Testament or New, at their being *taken into* the church, if the things which Mr. Williams says are true; though he speaks so often of professions, and words of professions, and declarations, made on such occasions, as if we had an express account of them in Scripture.

V. As our author abundantly maintains, that unsanctified men in covenanting with God, may and do promise the exercise of saving faith, repentance love, &c.; so he holds, that they promise to begin the exercise of these graces *immediately, from this moment*, and to live in them from *henceforth*, p. 25, 26. 28, 76.

Now I desire this matter may be looked into, and thoroughly examined Not only the holy Scriptures, and agreeable to them, Mr. Stoddard, and sound divines in general, teach us, but Mr Williams himself maintains, that men who are unsanctified, do for *the present refuse and oppose* these things. In a forecited place of his sermon on Isa. xlv. 11, our author says, that "Unregenerate and unsanctified men oppose all means for the bringing them to these things, are willingly without them, and labor to find out all manner of difficulties and hinderances in the way of them; and if they pray for them, do not desire they should come yet, but would stay a while longer." Now, how is this consistent with such persons' promising with any sincerity at all, that they will comply with and perform these things *immediately, from henceforth*, without staying *one moment* longer? If God calls a man *this moment* to yield his whole heart to him in faith, love and new obedience; and if he, in answer to the call, solemnly promises and swears* to God, that he will immediately comply with the call, without the least delay, and does it with any *sincerity* inconsistent with the most vile perfidy and perjury; then how does he now willingly refuse, oppose, and struggle against it, as choosing to *stay a while longer?*

Besides, such promises and oaths of unregenerate men must not only be contrary to sincerity, but very *presumptuous*, upon these two accounts. (1.) Because herein they take an oath to the Most High, which, it is ten thousand to one, they will break as soon as the words are out of their mouths, by continuing still unconverted; yea, an oath which they are breaking even while they are uttering it. And what folly and wickedness is it for men to take such oaths! And how contrary to the counsel given by the wise man, in Eccl. v. 2, 4, 5, 6! And to what purpose should ungodly men be encouraged to utter such promises and oaths before the church, for the churchs's acceptance; which are so far from being worthy to be credited, or a fulfilment of them to be expected, that it is many thousands, and perhaps millions of times more likely to be otherwise? That is, it is so much more likely they will not be converted the very next *moment.* (2.) When an unconverted man makes such a promise, he promises what he has not to give, or which he has not sufficiency for the performance of; no sufficiency in himself, nor any sufficiency in any other that he has a claim o, or interest in. There is indeed a sufficiency in God to enable him; but he

* It must be observed, that Mr. Williams often speaks of the promise which an unregenerate man makes in covenanting with God as his oath, p. 18, 100, 101, 129 130, 143.

has no claim to it. For God's helping a man savingly to believe in Christ is a *saving blessing:* and Mr. Williams himself owns, that a man cannot by promise claim any saving blessings, till he has fulfilled the conditions of the covenant of grace, p. 22, 28. So that in vain it is said by Mr. Williams, p. 27, "I pray that it may be thoroughly considered what is propounded in the covenant of grace, and on what stock a man is to finish." Meaning (as appears by the sequel) the *stock* of God's sufficiency. To what purpose is this said? When the covenant of grace promises or makes over no such *stock* to him who has no interest in the promises of it, as having not yet complied with the condition of its promises. Nor does an unconverted man promise any thing in a humble dependence on that *stock:* no such men do *lay hold on God's strength*, or trust in God's sufficiency: for this is a discriminating mark of a true saint; as our author himself observes, in that forecited passage, in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 19.

I would here take notice of it as remarkable, that though Mr. Williams had owned that a natural man can claim no saving blessings by God's promise, yet to help out his scheme of a natural man's engaging and promising, even with an oath, the exercises of saving grace, he (in p. 27, 28, especially 28), speaking of the *great encouragement* on which unsanctified men can promise these things, supposes God has given *such encouragement* to them who promise and engage themselves to God with that degree of earnestness and sincerity which he often speaks of as requisite to communion, that we have reason to determine that God never will fail of bestowing on them saving grace; so that they shall fulfil their promises. I say, he supposes that we have reason to determine this, because he himself determines it. His words are these: "Though there be no promise of saving good, exclusive of faith, yet there being a command and encouragement, there are suitable springs of his endeavor and hope, in his engaging himself to God and casting himself upon his mercy with all the earnestness and sincerity he can. God NEVER will be worse than his encouragement, nor do less than he has encouraged, and he has said, *To him that hath, shall be given.*"

Now, if this be so, and if this will make it out, that an unconverted man who is morally sincere may reasonably, on this *encouragement*, promise immediately to believe and repent, though this be not in his own power; then it will follow that whenever an unconverted man covenants, with such moral sincerity as gives a lawful right to sacraments, *God* NEVER *will fail* of giving him converting grace *that moment*, to enable him *from thenceforward* to believe and repent as he promises. And if this be so, and none may lawfully covenant with God *without* moral sincerity (as Mr. Williams also says), then it will follow that *never* any one person comes, nor can come lawfully to the Lord's supper in an unconverted state; because when they enter into covenant lawfully (supposing them not converted before) God always converts them in the moment of their covenanting, *before* they come to the Lord's table. And if so, what is become of all this grand dispute about the lawfulness of persons' coming to the Lord's table, who have not converting grace?

VI. Mr. Williams greatly misrepresents me from time to time, in representing as though I had asserted, that "it is impossible for an unsanctified man to enter into covenant with God;" and that those who were unsanctified among the Israelites, did not enter into covenant with God; that the pretended covenanting of such is *not covenanting, but only lying, wilful lying;* and that no natural man can own the covenant, "but that he certainly lies, knows he lies, and designedly lies, in all these things, when he says them," p. 26, 22, 24, 31, 21.

Whereas I never said nor supposed any such thing. I never doubted but that multitudes of unsanctified persons, and in all ages of the Christian church, and in this age, and here in New England, have entered visibly, and in profession, into the covenant of grace, and have owned that covenant, and promised a compliance with all the duties of it, without known or wilful lying; for this reason, because they were deceived, and did not know their own hearts; and that they (however deceived) were under the obligations of the covenant, and bound by their engagements and promises: and that in that sense, they were God's covenant people, that by their own binding act they were engaged to God in covenant; though such an act, performed without habitual holiness, be an unlawful one. If a thing be externally devoted to God, by doing what ought not to have been done, the thing devoted may, by that act, be the Lord's: as it was with the censers of Korah and his company, Numb. xvi. 37, 38.

What I asserted, was, that none could "profess a compliance with the covenant of grace, and avouch JEHOVAH to be their God, and Christ to be their Saviour, i. e., that they are so by their own act and choice, and yet love the world more than JEHOVAH, without lying or being deceived. And that he, who is wholly under the power of a carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, cannot promise to love God with all his heart and with all his soul, without either great deceit, or the most manifest and palpable absurdity: inasmuch as promising supposes the person to be conscious to himself, or persuaded of himself, that he has such a heart in him; because his lips pretend to declare his heart, and the nature of a promise implies real intention, will and compliance of heart. And what can be more evident than these propositions? Surely they that reject the covenant of grace in their hearts (as Mr. Williams owns all unsanctified men do) cannot own it with their lips, without either deceiving or being deceived. Words cannot be a true signification of more than is in the mind. *Inward covenanting*, as Mr. Stoddard taught, is by an act of saving faith. (*Safety of Ap.* p. 85, 86.) And *outward covenanting* is an expression of *inward covenanting:* therefore, if it be not attended with *inward covenanting*, it is a false expression. And Mr. Williams, in effect, owns the same thing: for he says, p. 21, "That there is no doubt they who are wilful, obstinate sinners, deal *deceitfully and falsely* when they pretend to covenant with God." But so do all unregenerate sinners under the gospel, according to Mr. Stoddard's and his own doctrine. And thus the very point, about which he contests so earnestly and so long, and with so many great words, is, in the midst of it all, given up fully by his own concession.

VII. Mr. Williams is greatly displeased with my saying (as above) that none who are under the power of a carnal mind can visibly own the covenant, *without lying, or being deceived*, &c. And he finds great fault with my gloss on Psal. lxxviii. 36, 37, "They did flatter him with their mouth, and lie to him with their tongue:" which I interpret as though they lied in pretending that respect to God, which indeed they had not, p. 35 of my *Inquiry*. But he insists, that what is meant is only their "lying in breaking their promise," p. 24. And he insists upon it (as has been observed already) that natural men may covenant with God and *speak true*. But it seems he has wonderfully changed his mind of late: for a little while ago he declared elsewhere *for* the very same things which he here inveighs *against*, and spoke of natural men's profession and pretence of respect to God, as being actually a LIE IN ITS OWN NATURE; and not only becoming so by their breaking covenant afterwards. Particularly, it is remarkable, he has thus interpreted this very text now in dispute. In his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, speaking of the outward acts of *wor-*

ship done by those that do not love God nor believe in Christ, he expressly says, p. 77, "They are *in their own nature a* LIE; a false pretence of something *within*, that is not there. See (says Mr. Williams) this interpretation of it, in Psal. lxxviii. 34—37, *They did flatter him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues*," &c. Ibid. p. 74, "Christ's visible church are such as visibly and outwardly profess to be his subjects, and act outwardly as if they believed on him. But these outward acts in themselves are not that religion and obedience, which Christ requires; nay, of themselves they have no religion in them; and Christ has nothing to do with them, *but as* they are the fruits and expressions of the heart, as they are the language and index of the mind and conscience, and outward declarations of the inward frame, temper and actings of the soul. If they are *not so*, they are so far from having any religion in them that are *hateful* to him, being only the visible resemblance, the pretence and *feigning* of religion; i. e., they are *mockery, hypocrisy*, FALSEHOOD and LIES; and belong not to the kingdom of Christ, but of the *Devil*." Let the reader now compare this with my gloss on the text.

CONCLUSION OF THIS SECOND PART.

Thus I have considered the various parts and principles of Mr. Williams's scheme, which are the foundations on which he builds all his superstructure, and the ground on which he proceeds in all his reasonings, through his book; and many particulars in his answers and arguments have been already considered. Mr. Williams says thus, p. 135, "I own, that at present I have no more expectation to see the scheme which Mr. Edwards aims to establish, defended upon Calvinistic principles, than the doctrine of *transubstantiation*." On which I shall only say, it might perhaps be thought very impertinent in me, to tell my readers what I do, or what I do not expect, concerning *his* scheme Every reader, that has reason enough of his own not to take the big words and confident speeches of others for demonstration, is now left to judge for himself, whose scheme is most akin to the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, for inconsistence and self-contradiction.

Nevertheless, I will proceed to consider our author's reasonings a little more particularly, in the ensuing part.

PART III.

CONTAINING SOME REMARKS ON MR. WILLIAMS'S EXCEPTIONABLE WAY OF REASONING, IN SUPPORT OF HIS OWN SCHEME, AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE CONTRARY PRINCIPLES.

SECTION I.

General Observations upon his Way of arguing, and answering Arguments; with some Instances of the first Method excepted against.

MR. WILLIAMS endeavors to support his own opinion, and to confute the book he pretends to answer, by the following methods.

1. By frequently *misrepresenting what I say*, and then disputing or exclaiming against what he wrongfully charges as mine.

2. By misrepresenting what others say in their writings, whose opinions he pretends to *espouse*.

3. By *seeming to oppose* and *confute* arguments, and yet only saying things which have no *reference* at all to them, but relate entirely to *other* matters, that are altogether *foreign* to the argument in hand.

4. By advancing *new* and *extraordinary notions;* which are both manifestly contrary to *truth*, and also contrary to the *common apprehensions* of the Christian church in all ages.

5. By making use of peremptory and confident *assertions*, instead of arguments.

6. By using great *exclamation*, in the room of arguing; as though he would amuse and alarm his readers, and excite terror in them, instead of rational conviction.

7. By wholly *overlooking* arguments, and *not answering* at all; pretending, that there is *no* argument, *nothing* to answer, when the case is manifestly far otherwise.

8. By frequently turning off an argument with this reflection, that it is *begging the question;* when there is not the least show or pretext of it.

9. By very frequently *begging the question* himself, or doing that which is *equivalent.*

10. By often alleging and insisting on things in which he is *inconsistent* with himself.

As the *first* of these methods used by Mr. Williams, i. e., his *misrepresenting what I say*, and then disputing or exclaiming against what he injuriously charges as mine, many instances have been already observed: I now would take notice of some other instances.

In p. 15, he charges me with "affirming vehemently, in a number of repetitions, *that the doctrine taught is, that no manner of pretence to any* VISIBLE *holiness is made or designed to be made.*" These he cites as my words, marking them with notes of quotation. Whereas I never said any such words, nor said or thought any such *thing*, but the contrary. I knew, that those whose doctrine I opposed, declared that *visible* holiness was necessary: and take particular notice of it, p. 8, where I say, "It is granted on all hands, that none ought to be admitted, as members of the visible church of Christ, but visible saints;" and argue on this supposition for fifteen pages together, in that same part of my book where Mr. Williams charges me with asserting the contrary. What I say is, that people are taught that *they come into the church without any pretence to sanctifying grace* (p. 15), I do not say without a pretence to *visible holiness.* Thus Mr. Williams alters my words, to make them speak something, not only diverse, but contrary to what I do say, and say very often; and so takes occasion, or rather *makes* an occasion, to charge me before the world, with telling a *manifest untruth*, p. 15.

Again, Mr. Williams in answering my argument concerning brotherly *love* (p. 70, 71), represents me as arguing, "That in the exercise of Christian *love* described in the gospel, there is such a union of hearts, as there cannot be of a saint to an unsanctified man." Which is a thing I never said, and is quite contrary to the sentiments which I have abundantly declared. I indeed speak of that *brotherly love*, as what cannot be of a saint to one that is not *apprehended* and *judged* to be sanctified. But that notion of a peculiar love, which cannot be to an unsanctified man, or without the reality of holiness in the person beloved, is what I ever abhorred, and have borne a most loud and open and large testimony against, again and again, from the press, and did so in the preface to that very book which Mr. Williams writes against.

In p. 74, Mr. Williams represents me as supposing, that in the sacrament

of the Lord's supper, *both the* covenanting *parties*, viz., Christ and the communicant, *seal to the truth* of the communicant's faith; or that both seal to this as true, that the communicant *does receive Christ.* Whereas, by me, no such thing was ever thought; nor is any thing said that has such an aspect. What I say, is very plain, and express (p. 75.), *That Christ by his minister professes his part of the covenant, presents himself, and professes the willingness of his heart to be theirs who receive him.* That on the other hand, *the communicant,* in receiving the offered symbols, *professes his part in the covenant, and the willingness of his heart to receive Christ who is offered.* How different is this from both parties sealing to the truth of the communicant's faith!

In p. 76, 77 and 80, he greatly misrepresents my argument from 1 Cor. xi. 28, "Let a man examine himself," &c., as though I supposed *the Greek word translated* examine, *must necessarily imply an examination to approbation;* that it *signifies to approve;* and *that a man's examination must mean his approving himself to himself to be sanctified.* This representation he makes over and over, and builds his answer to the argument, upon it; and in opposition to this he says,(p 77), "Wherever the word means to examine to approbation, it is not used in its natural sense, but metonymically." Whereas, there is not the least foundation for such a representation: no such thing is said or suggested by me, as if I supposed that the meaning of the word is to *approve* or to *examine to approbation.* What I say is, that it properly signifies *proving* or *trying a thing, whether it be true and of the right sort* (p. 77). And I there, in the same place, expressly speak of the word (in the manner Mr. Williams does) as not used in its natural sense, but metonymically, when it is used to signify *approve.* So that Mr. Williams's representation is not only diverse from, but contrary to what I say. Indeed I suppose (as well I may) that when the apostle directs persons to try themselves with respect to their qualifications for the Lord's supper, he would not have them come, if upon trial they find themselves not qualified. But it would be ridiculous to say, that I therefore suppose the meaning of the word, *try* or *examine,* is to approve, when it is evident that the *trying* is only in order to knowing whether a thing is to be *approved,* or *disapproved.*

In p. 98, on the argument from John's baptism, Mr. Williams alters my words, bringing them the better to comport with the odious representation he had made of my opinion, viz., that I required a giving an account of *experiences,* as a term of communion; he puts in words as mine, which are not mine, and distinguishes them with marks of quotation; charging me with *representing it as* "probable that John had as much time to inquire into their experiences as into their doctrinal knowledge." Whereas, my words are these, p. 101, "He had as much opportunity to inquire into the credibility of their profession, as he had to inquire into their doctrinal knowledge and moral character."

In p. 118, and to the like purpose, p. 134, our author represents me, and others of my principles, as holding, that *the gospel does peremptorily sentence men to damnation for eating and drinking without sanctifying grace.* But surely Mr. Williams would have done well to have referred to the place in my Inquiry, where any thing is said that has such a look. For, I find nothing that I have said in that book, or any other writing of mine, about the gospel's peremptorily sentencing such men to damnation, or signifying how far I thought they were exposed to damnation, or expressing my sentiments more or less about the matter.

In p. 130 and 131, Mr. Williams says, when one sees with what epithets of honor Mr Edwards in some parts of his book has complimented Mr. Stod-

dard, it must look like a strange medley to tack to them,—*That he was a weak beggar of his question; a supposer of what was proved; taking for granted the point in controversy; inconsistent with himself; ridiculously contradicting his own arguments.*" These expressions, which Mr. Williams speaks of as tacked to those honorable epithets, he represents as expressions which I had used concerning Mr. Stoddard: and his readers that have not consulted my book, would doubtless take it so from his manner of representation. Whereas, the truth is, no one of these expressions is used concerning Mr. Stoddard anywhere in my book; nor is there one disrespectful word spoken of him there. All the ground Mr. Williams had to make such a representation, was, that in *arguments* against my opinion I endeavored to show them to be *weak* (though I do not find that I used that epithet), and certainly for one to pretend to answer arguments, and yet allow them to be strong, would be to show *himself* to be very weak. In answering some of these arguments, and endeavoring to show wherein the inconclusiveness of them lay, I have sometimes taken notice that the defect lay in what is called *begging the question*, or supposing the thing to be proved. And if I had said so concerning Mr. Stoddard's arguments, speaking of them *as his*, I do not know why it should be represented as any *personal* reflection, or unhandsome, dishonorable treatment of *him*. Every inconclusive argument is weak; and the business of a disputant is to show wherein the weakness lies: but to speak of *arguments* as weak, is not to call *men* weak. All the ground Mr. Williams has to speak of me as saying that Mr. Stoddard *ridiculously contradicted his own arguments*, is, that in p. 11, citing some passages out of Mr. Stoddard's *Appeal*, I use these words: "But how he reconciled these passages with the rest of his treatise, I would modestly say, I must confess myself at a loss." And particularly I observed, that I could not see how they consist with what he says, p. 16, and so proceed to mention one thing which appears to me not well to consist with them. But certainly this is not indecently to reflect on Mr. Stoddard any more than Mr. Williams indecently reflects on the FIRST REFORMERS, in his answer to Mr. Croswell, p. 74, 75, where speaking of their doctrine of a particular persuasion as of the essence of saving faith, he says, "they are found inconsistent with themselves, and their doctrine lighter than vanity." And again, p. 82, "if ever (says Mr. Williams) any men were confuted from their own concessions, these divines are." And more to the like purpose. Which gives me a fair occasion to express the like *wonder* at him, as he does at me, p. 131, but I forbear *personal* reflections.

Mr. Williams, in the same page, has these words: "And to say, that all unsanctified men do profess and seal their consent to the covenant of grace in the Lord's supper, when they KNOW at the same time they do not consent to it, nor have their heart at all in the affair, is something *worse* than begging the question." That is, as I suppose (the same that he charged me with before), *telling a manifest untruth*. By which he plainly suggests that I have *said* thus. Whereas I nowhere say, nor in any respect signify, that I suppose all unsanctified communicants do KNOW that they do not consent to the covenant of grace. I never made any doubt, but that multitudes of unsanctified communicants are deceived, and think they do consent to it.

In p. 132, he says of me, "The author endeavors to show, that the admitting unsanctified persons tends to the ruin and reproach of the Christian church: and to the ruin of the persons admitted." But how widely different is this from what I express in the place he refers to! *Inq.* p. 121. That which I say there, is, that "by express liberty given, to open the door to as many as please, of those who have *no visibility* of real saintship, and make no profes-

sion of it, nor pretension to it, is a method which tends to the ruin and great reproach of the Christian church, and also to the ruin of the persons admitted." I freely grant, and show abundantly in my book, it is never to be expected, that all unsanctified men can be kept out, by the most exact attendance on the rules of Christ, by those that admit members.

In p. 136, Mr. Williams, wholly without grounds, speaks of me as representing, that "unconverted men make pretension to nothing but what God's enemies have, remaining in open and avowed rebellion against him." Whereas, I suppose that some natural men do profess, and profess truly *many things*, which those have not, who are *open* and *avowed* enemies of God. They may truly profess that sort of moral sincerity in many things belonging to morality and religion, which avowed enemies have not: nor is there any sentence or word in my book, which implies or intimates the contrary.

In p. 141, Mr. Williams evidently insinuates, that I am one of those who, "if men live never so strictly conformable to the laws of the gospel, and never so diligently seek their own salvation, to outward appearance, yet do not stick to speak of them, and act openly towards them, as persons giving no more public evidence, that they are not the enemies of God and haters of Jesus Christ, than the very worst of the heathen." But surely every one that has read my book, every one that knows my constant conduct, and manner of preaching, as well as writing, and how much I have written, said and done against judging and censuring persons of an externally moral and religious behavior, must know how injurious this representation of me is.

SECTION II.

Instances of the second thing mentioned as exceptionable in Mr. Williams's Method of managing this controversy, viz., his misrepresenting what is said in the writings of others, that he supposes favors his opinion.

Perhaps instances enough of this have already been taken notice of; yet I would now mention some others.

In what he says in reply to my answer to the eighth *objection*, he says, p. 108, "Mr. Stoddard does not say, if sanctifying grace be necessary to a person's lawful partaking of the Lord's supper, then God would have given some certain rule, whereby those WHO ARE TO ADMIT THEM, may know whether they have such grace, or not." Mr. Williams there intimates (as the reader may see) as if Mr. Stoddard spake so, that it is to be understood *disjunctively*, meaning he would *either* have given some certain rule to the church who admit them, or else to the persons themselves: so that by one means or other, the *Lord's supper might be restrained to converted men.* And he exclaims against me for representing as though Mr. Stoddard's argument were concerning a *certain rule, whereby those who are to admit them, may know whether they have grace* (see the foregoing page), and speaks of it as nothing akin to Mr. Stoddard's argument. Now let the reader take notice of Mr. Stoddard's words, and see whether his argument be not something akin to this. He says expressly, *Appeal*, p. 75, "God does not bind his CHURCH to impossibilities. If he had made such an ordinance, he would give gifts to his church, to distinguish sincere men from hypocrites, whereby the ordinance might have been attended. The *minor* is also evident: he has given no such rule to his CHURCH whereby it may be restrained to converted men. This appears, because by

the rule they are to go by, they are allowed TO GIVE the Lord's supper to many unconverted men. For all visible signs are common to men converted, and unconverted." So that Mr. Stoddard in fact does say, "If sanctifying grace be necessary to a person's lawful partaking of the Lord's supper, then God would have given some certain rule, whereby the church (those who are to admit them) may know, whether they have grace, or not." Though Mr. Williams denies it, and says, this is nothing akin to Mr. Stoddard's argument; contrary to the plainest fact.

In p. 99, Mr. Williams, replying to my answer to the sixth objection, misrepresents Mr. Hudson, in the following passage. "This [i. e., baptism], says Mr. Hudson, makes them members of the body of Christ. And as for a particular, explicit covenant, besides the general, imposed on churches, I find no mention of it, no example nor warrant for it in all the Scripture." Here Mr. Williams is still manifestly endeavoring to discredit my doctrine of an *explicit owning the covenant of grace;* and he so manages and alters Mr. Hudson's words, as naturally leads the reader to suppose that Mr. Hudson speaks against this: whereas, he says not a word about it. What Mr. Hudson speaks of, is not an explicit owning the covenant of grace, or baptismal covenant; but a *particular church covenant*, by which a particular society binds themselves explicitly, one to another, jointly to carry on the public worship. Mr. Hudson's words are, p. 19, "I dare not make a *particular, explicit, holy covenant to be the* FORM *of a* PARTICULAR *church, as this description seemeth to do;* because I find no mention of any such covenant, besides the general imposed on churches, nor example nor warrant for it in all the Scripture." And then afterwards Mr. Hudson says, "But it is the general covenant sealed by *baptism*, and not this, that makes them members of the body of Christ." Mr. Williams, by citing distant passages in Mr. Hudson, and joining them, in his own way, by particles and conjunctions, which Mr. Hudson does not use, and leaving out these words—*To be the form of a particular church, as this description seemeth to do*—quite blinds the mind of his reader, as to Mr. Hudson's true sense, which is nothing to Mr. Williams's purpose. Mr. Hudson says not a word here against, or about an *express or explicit covenanting*, or owning the covenant, in my sense: but in other places, in the same book, he speaks of it, and for it, as necessary for *all Christians*. Thus, in p. 69, "There is one individual, EXPRESS, external covenant; not only on God's part, but also it is one external, visible covenant, on men's part; which *all Christians*, as Christians, *enter into*, by their PROFESSED acceptance, and EXPRESS restipulation, and promised subjection and obedience; though not altogether in one place, or at one time." He speaks again to the same purpose, p. 100.

SECTION III.

Instances of the third thing observed in Mr. Williams's manner of arguing, viz, his pretending to oppose and answer arguments, by saying things which have no reference to them, but relate to other matters perfectly foreign to the subject of the argument.

Such is his answer (p. 37) to my argument from Isa. lvi. Particularly from those words, v. 6, 7, "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants—even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house

of prayer," &c. For I say nothing under that argument (as Mr. Williams in his answer presumes) which supposes any antithesis or opposition here between the state of the Gentiles and eunuchs *under the Old Testament, and under the gospel, as to terms of acceptance to God:* nor any opposition as to a greater necessity of sanctifying grace, to the lawful partaking of ordinances, under the gospel, than under the law; as Mr. Williams also supposes in his arguings on this head. But the *opposition* I speak of, as plainly pointed forth in the chapter, is this: that whereas under the law, *not only* piety of heart and practice were required, but something *else*, even soundness of body and circumcision, it is foretold, that under the gospel, piety of heart and practice *only* should be required; that although they were eunuchs or uncircumcised, yet if it appeared that they *loved the name of the Lord*, &c., they should be admitted.

So when I argued, that Christ, in the latter part of the 7th chapter of Matt. representing the final issue of things, with regard to the visible church in general, speaks of all as being such as had looked on themselves to be interested in him as their Lord and Saviour, and had an opinion of their good estate; though the hope of some was built on the *sand*, and others on a *rock:* Mr. Williams, in his reply, p. 40, 41, entirely overlooks the argument, and talks about other things. He says, "Christ does not fault those that cried *Lord, Lord*, for entering into covenant, but for not keeping covenant," p. 41. Here he runs back to another thing, relating to another argument, to which this has no reference, which he dwells wholly upon; and says nothing to the argument I use in that place.

So in his reply to what I say on the parable of the *wheat and tares*, p. 98, &c. He has entirely overlooked the argument. He says, to vindicate the objection p. 99, "Which we think shows us the mind and will of Christ in this matter is, that his servants shall proceed only on certain established rules of his visible kingdom, and not upon any private rules of judging about them." Whereas, I never said, or supposed, that Christ's servants must not proceed *on certain established rules of his visible kingdom*, or that they ought to go upon *any private rules of judging;* but particularly and largely expressed my mind to the contrary, in my explaining the question: and say, *Inq.* p. 5, "That it is properly a visibility to the eye of the *public* charity, and not of a *private* judgment, that gives a right to be received as visible saints by the public." And repeat the same thing again, p. 125.

And as to what Mr. Williams says in this place about *infants being born in the church*, it entirely diverts the reader to another point (which I shall hereafter particularly consider) wholly distinct from the subject of the argument; which is about rules of *admission in the church*, whenever they are admitted. If persons are born in the church in complete standing, as Mr. Williams supposes, then they are not *admitted* at all, but in their *ancestors*. But however, the question returns, whether ancestors that are *unsanctified*, can have a lawful right to come into the church? Mr Williams holds they may. The subject of the argument is about *bringing in* tares into the field, *whenever they are brought in*, whether sooner or later: and whenever *tares* have a lawful right, by warrant from Christ, to be in the *field;* supposing this to intend the church of Christ. The argument I produced to the contrary was, that the tares were introduced contrary to the owner's design, through men's infirmity, and Satan's procurement. Which argument, being entirely overlooked by my opponent, I desire it may be now particularly considered.

When the *Devil* brought in the *tares*, it is manifest, he brought in something that did not belong there; and therein counteracted the *owner* of the field,

and did it under that very notion of crossing his design. *An enemy* (says the parable) *hath done this.* But how does this consist with the tares having a *lawful right*, by the owner's warrant and appointment, to have a standing in his field? If CHRIST by his institution has, in mercy to unsanctified men, given them a lawful right to come into the church, that it may be a means of their conversion; then it is a work of his kindness, as the compassionate Redeemer of souls, to bring them in; and not the doing of the great *enemy* and destroyer of souls. If the great Physician of souls has built his church, as an infirmary, in compassion to those that are sick, for this end, that they may be brought in and healed there; shall it be said with surprise, when such are found there, *How came these sick people* HERE? And shall the compassionate physician, who built the hospital, make answer, *An enemy hath done this?*

Besides, if Christ had appointed that unsanctified men should come into the church, in order to their conversion, it would be an instance of the *faithfulness* of his servants to bring in such. But the bringing in *tares* into the field, is not represented as owing to the faithfulness and watchfulness of the servants; but on the contrary, is ascribed to their *sleepiness* and remissness: they were brought in while *they slept*, who ought to have done the part of watchmen in keeping them out, and preventing the designs of the subtle enemy that brought them in. Perhaps some would be ready to make the reflection, that those churches whose practice is agreeable to the loose principles Mr. Williams espouses, do that at noonday, in the presence of God, angels and men, which the devil did in the dread of the might, *while men slept!*

Again, Mr. Williams, in his reply to my argument from that *Christian brotherly love*, which is required towards all members of the visible church, goes entirely off from the argument, to things quite alien from it. His first answer, p. 69, is, that "the exercise of this Christian love is not the term of communion or admission into the visible church;" which is perfectly foreign to the business. For the argument respects the *object* of this love, viz., visible saints *that are to be thus beloved;* and not at all the qualifications of the *inherent subject of it*, or the *person that exercises this love.* If they that are admitted, are to be loved *as true saints*, or *for the image of Christ appearing in them, or supposed to be in them* (as Mr. Williams allows, p. 68), then it will follow that none are to be admitted, but such as can reasonably be the objects of Christian love, or be loved as *true saints*, and as those who *have the image of Christ appearing in them.* Whether the exercise of this love be the term of communion, or not; yet if we are commanded to exercise this love to all that are admitted to communion, then it will certainly follow, that some reasonable ground for being thus beloved, must be a term of communion in such as are admitted. To suppose it appointed, that we should love all that are admitted as true saints, and yet that it is not appointed that such as are admitted should exhibit any reasonable grounds for such a love, is certainly to suppose very inconsistent appointments.*

Mr. Williams's second answer, p. 70, is no less impertinent, viz., "That men's right to communion in gospel ordinances does not depend upon the corruptions of other men, in their forbearing to love them." As if my argument

* "The apostles looked on all those, whom they gathered into churches or Christian congregations to eat the Lord's supper, as having the *truth* dwelling in them; and so they behoved, every one of them, to look upon one another: seeing they could not love one another as brethren in the truth, without acknowledging that truth as dwelling in them. And so we see the apostles, in their writings to the churches, supposing all their members objects of this brotherly love. Christ's visible church then is the congregation of those whom the apostle could call the *saints and faithful in Christ Jesus.* —*Glass's Notes on Scripture Text*, Numb. 5, p. 32.

were, that unless men are *actually loved*, as true saints, they have no right to communion! Whereas, the argument was very diverse, viz., That unless men have *a right to be so loved*, they have no right to communion. If men have an appearance, to reason, of being true saints, they may have a right to be loved as true saints, and to be admitted as such; however corrupt and void of love other men are: but without such an appearance to reason, it is *no corruption*, not to love them as true saints; unless it be corrupt, not to act without reason.*

As to Mr. Williams's third answer, and the misrepresentations it is built upon, it has already been taken notice of.

In Mr. Williams's reply to my answer to the *first objection*, p. 81, &c., he wholly leaves the argument, and writes in support and defence of other matters, quite different from those which I mentioned, or had any concern with. The objection which I mentioned, and which had been much insisted on by some against my opinion, was, that church members are called *disciples*, or scholars; a name that gives us a notion of the visible church as a school; and leads us to suppose, that all who profess that sort of faith and sincerity, which implies a disposition to seek Christian learning and spiritual attainments, are qualified for admission. But Mr. Williams says nothing at all in support of this objection. In answer to it, I endeavored to show, that the name *disciples* given to church members, does not argue that unsanctified persons are fit to be members. He says nothing to show that it *does*. He says, if it will not follow from Christ's visible church's being represented as Christ's school, that it is in order to *all* good attainments; *yet it is in order to all that they have not yet attained* Which is nothing to the purpose, but foreign to the thing in debate, viz., *Whether sanctifying grace is one of those things which are not yet attained by those that are lawfully in the church.* He there says nothing to prove that it is; and especially to prove it from the meaning of the word disciples, which was the argument in hand. He insists, that men may be sufficiently subject to Christ as their master and teacher, in order to be in his school or church, without grace: but then the thing to be proved, was, that church members being called *disciples* makes this evident, in order to support the argument or objection I was upon: which argument is entirely neglected throughout all his discourse under this head.

So in his reply to my answer to the 11th objection, p. 123, &c., he wholly neglects the argument, and labors to support a different one. I endeavored, without concerning myself about the words of any argument in Mr. Stoddard's Appeal, to answer an argument abundantly used at Northampton against my doctrine, of unsanctified men's not having a right to come to the Lord's supper; which was this, "You may as well say, that unsanctified men may not attend any other duty of worship;" and particularly, "you may as well forbid them to *pray*." As for Mr. Stoddard's objection, in these words, "If unsanctified men may attend all other ordinances or duties of worship, then they may lawfully attend the Lord's supper;" it was an argument I was not obliged to attend to in the words in which *he* delivered it, because it was not an argument brought against *my* scheme of things, but one very diverse: since it is not my opinion, that unsanctified men may attend "all other ordinances or duties of worship,

* A good argument might also be drawn from the corruption of unsanctified men; for that they are all so under the power of corruption, that they are not able to love saints, or any one else, with truly Christian love. Agreeable to what Mr. Stoddard says in his *Three Sermons*, p. 40, "Men are obliged to love their neighbors as themselves. But no natural men do in any measure live up to that rule: but men are great enemies to one another, *hateful* and *hating one another*. They do but little good one to another. They do a great deal of hurt one to another." Now is it reasonable to suppose, that such men have the proper qualifications, by divine institution, for a lawful right to be members of the visible family of God?

besides the Lord's supper;" for I do not suppose, such may offer themselves to baptism, which Mr. Stoddard takes for granted, in his argument. And therefore, what Mr. Williams says in support of it, is quite beside the business. As to the argument I was concerned with, taken especially from the lawfulness of unsanctified men's *praying*, to prove, that therefore it must be lawful for them to come to the Lord's supper, certainly if there be any consequence in it, the consequence depends on the truth of this supposition, *That the same thing which makes it lawful for a man to* pray, *also makes it lawful for him to come to the Lord's supper.* And seeing this position is proved to be not true, the argument falls to the ground. And Mr. Williams's nice observations and distinctions, of a *non obstante*, and a *simply and per se*, are nothing to the purpose.

This good reason (with several others) may be given why the same that makes it lawful for a man to pray and hear the word, will not make it lawful for him to partake of sacraments, viz., that the sacraments are not only duties, but covenant privileges, and are never lawfully given or received but under that notion. Whereas it is not so with prayer and hearing the word: and therefore they who have no interest in the covenant of grace, and are in no respect God's covenant people, may lawfully hear the word and pray. But it is agreed on all hands, that they who are not in some respects God's covenant people, may not come to sacraments: and the reason is this, because sacraments are covenant privileges. And this same reason will prove that none but *true believers*, or those that have saving faith, the only condition of the covenant of grace, have a right to sacraments. For, as was observed before, the condition of any covenant is the condition of all the benefits or privileges of that covenant. See Part II. Sec. 8.

SECTION IV.

The fourth thing observed in Mr. Williams's method of managing the controversy, particularly considered, viz., his advancing new and extraordinary notions, not only manifestly contrary to Truth, but also to the common and received principles of the Christian Church.

Thus it is with regard to many things which have already been taken notice of. As, that men may be ungodly men, and yet truly profess to love God more than the world: that men may be professors of religion and have no true grace, and yet not be lukewarm, but serve God as their only master: that such may profess to be subject to Christ with all their hearts, and to give up all their hearts and lives to Christ, and speak true, &c. &c.

I shall now take notice of another remarkable instance of this, viz., that Mr. Williams, in his reply to my argument, from the epithets and characters given by the apostles to the members of the visible Christian churches, in their epistles, represents, p. 56, that there "is no difference in all the epithets and characters, which I have heaped up from the New Testament," from those that are given in the Old Testament, to the whole body of the Jewish church; which he elsewhere abundantly supposes to be the whole body of the Jewish nation; yea, even in their *worst* times, until the nation was rejected and cast off by God from being any longer his people; as I shall have occasion particularly to observe afterwards.

That it may be the easier judged, how manifestly this is contrary to truth, I shall here repeat some of those epithets and characters I before mentioned.

which Mr Williams has reference to. This is very manifest concerning most of them. But that I may not be tedious, I will now rehearse but a few instances, viz., being "made free from sin, and becoming the servants of righteousness;" having "the spirit of adoption;" being "the children of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ;" being "vessels of mercy prepared unto glory;" being such "as do not live to themselves, nor die to themselves; but live unto the Lord and die unto the Lord;" and who, "living and dying are the Lord's;" being those that have "all things for theirs, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; because they are Christ's;" being "begotten through the gospel;" being such as "shall judge the world;" being "washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;" being "manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, written, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not in the tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart;" being such as "behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory;" being "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love; and predestinated unto the adoption of children;" being "sealed by that holy Spirit of promise;" being "quickened, though once dead in trespasses and sins;" being "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" being "dead, and having their life hid with Christ in God;" and being those that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, shall also appear with him in glory; having put off the old man with his deeds, and having put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him;" being "begotten again to a living hope—to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them; who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; who love Christ though they have not seen him; in whom, though now they see him not, yet believing, they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; having purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit; knowing him that is from the beginning; having their sins forgiven; having overcome the wicked one; having an unction from the holy one, by which they know all things; who are now the sons of God; and who, when Christ shall appear, shall be like him, because they shall see him as he is."

Now let the Christian reader judge, with what face of reason our author could represent, as though there were nothing in all these epithets and characters, more than used of old to be given to the whole nation of the Jews, and that, even in times of their greatest corruption and apostasy, till the nation was rejected of God! One would think, there is no need of arguing the matter with any that have read the Bible.

This representation of Mr. Williams's is not only very contrary to truth but also to the common sentiments of the Christian church. Though I pretend not to be a person of great reading, yet I have read enough to warrant this assertion. I never yet (as I remember) met with any author that went the same length in this matter with Mr. Williams, but only Mr. Taylor of Norwich, in England, the author that lately has been so famous for his corrupt doctrine. In his piece which he calls *A Key to the Apostolic Writings*, where he delivers his scheme of religion (which seems scarcely so agreeable to the Christian scheme, as the doctrine of many of the wiser Heathen) he delivers the same opinion, and insists largely upon it; it being a main thing he makes use of to establish his whole scheme. And it evidently appears in the manner of his delivering it, that he is sensible it is exceeding far from what has hitherto been the com-

monly received sentiment in the Christian world. He supposes that as all those epithets and characters belong to the whole nation of the Jews, even in their most corrupt times, so they belong to all Christendom, even the most vicious parts of it; that the most vicious men who are baptized, and profess to believe Jesus to be the Messiah, are "chosen before the foundation of the world, predestinated according to the foreknowledge of God, regenerated, justified, sanctified children of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, the spouse of Christ, the temple of God, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, being the family of heaven," &c. &c. And certainly he may with as good reason, and with the same reason, suppose this of all Christendom, even the most vicious parts of it, as of the whole nation of the Jews, however corrupt, till there was a national rejection of them.

Indeed it is manifest there is no other way of evading the force of the argument from the epistles, but by falling into Taylor's scheme. If his scheme of religion be not true, then it is plain as any fact in the New Testament, that all the Christian churches, through the whole earth, in the apostles' days, were constituted in the manner that I insist on. The Scripture says ten times as much to demonstrate this matter, as it does about the manner of discipline, officers, and government of the church, or as it does about the several parts of the public worship, or about the sanctification of the Christian Sabbath.

SECTION V.

Instances of the fifth and sixth particulars, in Mr. Williams's method of disputing, viz., his using confident and peremptory Assertions, and great Exclamations, instead of Arguments.

We have an instance of the *former*, in his reply to my answer to the 14th objection, viz., that "it is not unlawful for unsanctified men to carry themselves like saints." I objected against this, if thereby be meant, that they may lawfully carry themselves externally like the saints in all respects, remaining ungodly; and mentioned some things which belonged to the external duty of godly men, which no ungodly man, remaining such, may do. To which Mr. Williams makes no reply; but to prove the point says, "Mr. Stoddard knew, and all divines know, that the external carriage of some unsanctified men *is*, to the outward appearance, and the public judgment of the church, the same with the carriage of the saints; and they know they are *bound* to such a behavior." And this peremptory, confident assertion, is all the argument he brings to prove the thing asserted.

Again, I observe, that sometimes Mr. Williams uses *great exclamation*, as though he intended to alarm, and excite terror in his readers, and raise their indignation: though they are perhaps never like to know *for what*. We have two very remarkable instances of this, p. 136 and 137, where he says, "I shall further take notice of two *extraordinary* and *surprising* passages, if I understand them. And I have with great diligence tried to find out the meaning of them. One is p. 129, between the 17th and 23d lines; if it be rightly printed." He does not quote my words: this mighty exclamation would have become too flat, and appeared ridiculous, if he had. The passage referred to is in these words:—"Indeed such a tendency (i. e., a tendency to irreligion and profaneness) it would have, to shut men out from having any part in the Lord

in the sense of the two tribes and half, Josh. xxii. 25, or to fence them out by such a partition wall, as formerly was between Jews and Gentiles: and so shut them out as to tell them, if they were never so much disposed to serve God, he was not ready to accept them: according to the notion the Jews seem to have had of the uncircumcised Gentiles." That is, plainly, to shut them out so as to tell them, that let them have hearts never so well and piously disposed to love and serve God, their love and service could not be accepted. This doubtless would have a tendency to discourage religion in men. And how the owning of it is an owning my scheme to have such a tendency, I do not know. Mr Williams might as well have picked out any other sentence through all th 136 pages of the book, and called it an *extraordinary passage*, and stood astonished over it, and told how he was ready to doubt whether it was rightly printed, and what *great diligence* he had used *to find out the meaning of it!*

The other extraordinary passage he stands thunderstruck with, is in these words; "May it not be suspected, that this way of baptizing children of such as never make any proper profession of godliness, is an expedient, originally invented for that very end, to give ease to ancestors with respect to their posterity, in times of great declension and degeneracy?" Mr. Williams knows, that through the whole of the book I suppose this practice of baptizing the children of such as are here spoken of, is *wrong;* and so does *he* too; for he abundantly allows, that persons, in order to be admitted to the privileges of visible saints, must make a profession of real piety, or gospel holiness. And if it be wrong, as we are both agreed, then surely it is nothing akin to blasphemy, to suspect that it arose from some bad cause.

SECTION VI.

Instances of the seventh particular, observed in Mr. Williams's way of disputing, viz., his wholly overlooking arguments, pretending there is no argument, nothing to answer; when the case is far otherwise.

Thus in his reply to my tenth argument, which was this, "It is necessary, that those who partake of the Lord's supper should judge themselves truly and cordially to accept Christ as their Saviour, and chief good; for this is what the actions, which communicants perform at the Lord's table, are a solemn profession of." I largely endeavored in p. 75, 76 and 77, to prove this, from the nature of those significant actions, of receiving the symbols of Christ's body and blood when offered, representing their accepting the thing signified, as their spiritual food, &c. To all which Mr. Williams says, p. 74, "I do not find that Mr. Edwards has said any thing to prove the proposition, which is the whole argument offered here in proof of the point proposed to be proved, but only gives his opinion, or paraphrase of the purport and nature of the sacramental actions." Since Mr. Williams esteems it no argument, I desire it may be considered impartially whether there be any argument in it or no.

These sacramental actions all allow to be *significant* actions. They are a signification and profession of something. They are not actions without a meaning. And all allow, that these external actions signify something *inward* and *spiritual*. And if they signify any thing spiritual, they doubtless signify those spiritual things which they represent. But what *inward* thing does the

outward taking or accepting the body and blood of Christ represent, but the *inward* accepting Christ's body and blood, or an accepting him in the heart? And what *spiritual* thing is the outward feeding on Christ in this ordinance a sign of, but a spiritual feeding on Christ, or the soul's feeding on him? Now there is no other way of the soul's feeding on him, but by that *faith*, by which Christ becomes our spiritual food, and the refreshment and vital nourishment of our souls. The *outward eating and drinking* in this ordinance is a sign of *spiritual eating and drinking*, as much as the *outward bread* in this ordinance is a sign of *spiritual bread*; or as much as the *outward drink* is a sign of *spiritual drink*. And doubtless those actions, if they are a profession of any thing, are a profession of the things they signify.* To say, that these significant actions are appointed to be a *profession* of something, but not to be a profession of the *things* they are appointed to *signify*, is as unreasonable as to say, that certain sounds or words are appointed to be a profession of something, but not to be a profession of the things signified by those words.

Again, Mr Williams, in his reply to my answer to the *second objection*, with like contempt passes over the main argument which I offered, to prove that the nation of Israel were called *God's people*, and *covenant people*, in another sense besides a being visible saints. My argument in p. 85, 86, was this: that it is manifest, that something diverse from being visible saints, is often intended by that nation's being called *God's people*, and that that nation, the family of Israel, *according to the flesh*, and not with regard to any moral and religious qualifications, were in some sense adopted by God, to be his peculiar and covenant people, from Rom. ix. 3, 4, 5: "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren according to the flesh; who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the COVENANTS, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers," &c. I observed, that these privileges here mentioned, are spoken of as belonging to the Jews, not now as visible saints, not as professors of the true religion, not as members of the visible church of Christ, which they did not belong to, but only as a people of such a nation, such a blood, such an external, carnal relation to the patriarchs, their ancestors; *Israelites, according to the flesh*. Inasmuch as the apostle is speaking here of the *unbelieving Jews*, professed unbelievers, that were out of the Christian church, and open, visible enemies to it; and such as had no right at all to the external privileges of Christ's people. I observed further, that in like manner this apostle in Rom. xi. 28, 29, speaks of the same *unbelieving Jews*, that were enemies to the gospel, as in some respect an elect people, and interested in the calling, promises, and covenants, God formerly gave their forefathers, and are still beloved for their sakes. "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes. But as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

All that Mr. Williams says, which has any reference to these things, is, "that he had read my explication of the name of *the people of God*, as given

* Mr. Stoddard owns, that the sacramental actions, both in baptism and the Lord's supper, signify *saving faith* in Christ, *Safety of Ap.* p. 170: "By baptism is signified *our fellowship with Christ* in his sufferings. That is signified hereby, that we have an interest in the virtue of his sufferings, that his sufferings are made over unto us, and that we do participate in the good and benefit of them. It was John *the Baptist's* manner, before he baptized persons, to teach them that they must *believe on Christ*. And the apostles and apostolical men would not baptize any adult persons but such as professed to *believe on Christ*. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. Baptism is mentioned as the evidence of faith." So concerning the Lord's supper, *Ibid.* p. 122, 123: "In this ordinance we are invited to put our *trust* in the death of Christ. *Take, eat; this is my body; and drink ye all of it.* WHEN the body feeds on the sacramental bread and wine, the *soul* is to do that *which answers unto it*. The soul is to *feed* on Christ crucified; which is nothing else but the acting *faith* on him."

to the people of Israel &c. But that he confesses, it is perfectly unintelligible to him." The impartial reader is left to judge, whether the matter did not require some other answer.

SECTION VII.

What is, and what is not begging the question; and how Mr. Williams charges me, from time to time, with begging the question, without cause.

Among the particulars of Mr. Williams's method of disputing, I observed, that *he often causelessly charges me with begging the question, while he frequently begs the question himself, or does that which is equivalent.*

But that it may be determined with justice and clearness, who does, and who does not beg the question, I desire it may be particularly considered, what that is which is called *begging the question* in a dispute. This is more especially needful for the sake of illiterate readers. And here,

1. Let it be observed, that merely to suppose something in a dispute, without bringing any argument to prove it, is not begging the question. For this is done necessarily, in every dispute, and even in the best and clearest demonstrations. One point is proved by another until at length the matter is reduced to a point that is supposed to need no proof; either because it is self-evident, or is a thing wherein both parties are agreed, or so clear that it is supposed it will not be denied.

2. Nor is begging the question the same thing as offering a weak argument to prove the point in question. It is not all weak arguing, but one *particular way* of weak arguing, that is called *begging the question.*

3. Nor is it the same thing as *missing the true question*, and bringing an argument that is impertinent, or *beside the question.*

But the thing which is called *begging the question*, is the making use of the very point, that is the thing in debate, or the thing to be proved, as an argument to prove itself. Thus, if we were endeavoring to prove that none but godly persons might come to sacraments, and should take this for an argument to prove it, that none might come but such as have saving faith, taking this for granted; I should then beg the question: for this is the very point in question, whether a man must have saving faith or no? It is called begging the question, because it is a depending as it were on the courtesy of the other side, to grant me the point in question, without offering any argument as the price of it.

And whether the point I thus take for granted, be the main point in question in the general dispute, or some subordinate point, something under consideration, under a particular argument; yet if I take this particular point for granted, and then make use of it to prove itself, it is begging the question.

Thus if I were endeavoring, under this *general controversy* between Mr. Williams and me, to prove that *particular point*, that we ought to love all the members of the Church as *true saints;* and should bring this as a proof of the point, that we ought to love all the members of the church as *true Christians*, taking this for granted; this is only the same thing, under another term, as the thing to be proved and therefore is no argument at all, but only begging the question.

Or if the point I thus take for granted, and make use of as an argument, be neither the general point in controversy, nor yet the thing nextly to be proved

under a particular argument; yet if it be some known controverted point between the parties, it is begging the question, or equivalent to it. For it is begging a thing known to be in question in the dispute, and using it as if it were a thing allowed.

I would now consider the instances, wherein Mr. Williams, asserts or suggests that I have begged the question.

In p. 30 and 31, he represents the force of my reasoning as built on a supposition, that there is no unsanctified man, but what knows he has no desire of salvation by Christ, no design to fulfil the covenant of grace, but designs to live in stealing, lying, adultery; or some other known sin: and then says, "Is it not manifest that such sort of reasoning is a mere quibbling with words, and begging the question?" And so insinuates, that I have thus begged the question. Whereas I nowhere say, or suppose this which he speaks of, nor any thing like it. But on the contrary, often say, what supposes an unsanctified man may *think* he is truly godly, and that he has truly upright and gracious designs and desires. Nor does any argument of mine depend on any such supposition. Nay, under the argument he speaks of, I expressly suppose the contrary, viz., that unsanctified men who visibly enter into covenant, may be deceived.

In p. 38, Mr. Williams makes a certain representation of my arguing from Isa. lvi., and then says upon it, "It is no arguing, but only begging the question." But as has been already shown, that which he represents as my argument from that Scripture, has no relation to my argument.

In p. 59, in opposition to my arguing from the epistles, that the apostles treated those members of churches which they wrote to, as those who had been received on a positive judgment, i. e. (as I explain myself), a proper and affirmative opinion, that they were real saints; Mr. Williams argues, that the apostles could make no such judgment of them, without either personal converse, or revelation; unless it be supposed to be founded on a presumption, that ministers who baptized them, would not have done it, unless they had themselves made such a a positive judgment concerning their state: and then adds these words, "This may do for this scheme, but only it is a begging the question." Whereas it is a point that never has been in question in this controversy, as ever I knew, whether some ministers or churches might reasonably and affirmatively suppose, the members of *other churches* they are united with, were admitted on evidence of proper qualifications (whatever they be, whether common or saving), trusting to the faithfulness of other ministers and churches. Besides, this can be no point in question between me and Mr. Williams, unless it be a point in question between him and himself. For he holds, as well as I, persons ought not to be received as visible Christians, without *moral evidence* (which is something positive, and not a mere negation of evidence of the contrary) of *gospel holiness.*

In p. 82 of my book I suppose, that none at all do truly subject themselves to Christ as their master, but those who graciously subject themselves to him and are delivered from the reigning power of sin. Mr. Williams suggests, p 83, that herein I beg the question. For which there is no pretext, not only as this is no known point in controversy between the parties in this debate; but also as it is a point I do not take for granted, but offer this argument to prove it, That they who have no grace, *are under the reigning power of sin*, and no man can truly subject himself to two such contrary masters, at the same time, as Christ and sin. I think this argument sufficient to obtain the point, without begging it. And besides, this doctrine, That they who have no grace do not truly subject themselves to Christ, was no point in question between me and

Mr. Williams. But a point wherein we were fully agreed, and wherein he had before expressed himself as fully, and more fully than I. In his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 18, he speaks of "all such as do not depend on Christ, believe in him, and give up themselves, and all to him, as not true subjects to Christ; but enemies to him and his kingdom." We have expressions to the same purpose again, in p. 74 and 91; and in p. 94, of the same book, he says, "It is utterly inconsistent with the nature of the obedience of the gospel, that it should be a *forced subjection*. No man is a *subject* of Christ, who does not make the laws and will of Christ his choice, and desire to be governed by him, and to live in subjection to the will of Christ, as *good*, and *fit*, and *best* to be the rule of his living, and *way to his happiness*. A forced obedience to Christ is *no obedience*. It is *in terms a contradiction*. Christ draws men with the cords of *love*, and the bands of a man. Our Lord has himself expressly determined this point." There are other passages in the same book, to the same purpose. So that I had no need to beg this point of Mr. Williams, since he had given it largely, and that in full measure, and over and over again, without begging.

In p. 120, he observes, "That to say such a profession of internal, invisible things is the rule to direct the church in admission—is to hide the parallel and beg the question. For the question here is about the persons' right to come, and not about the church's admitting them." Here Mr. Williams would make us believe that he does not know what begging the question is: for it is evident his meaning is, that my saying so is *beside the question*. But to say something beside the question is a different thing from begging the question, as has been observed. My saying that a *profession of invisible things* is the church's rule in admission, is not begging the question; because it is not, nor ever was any thing in question. For Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams himself are full in it, that a profession of *invisible things*, such as a believing that Christ is the Son of God, &c., is the church's rule. Yea, Mr. Williams is express in it, that a credible profession and visibility of *gospel holiness* is the church's rule, p. 139. Nor is my saying as above, *beside the question then in hand*, relating to the church of Israel's admitting to the priesthood, those that could not find their register. For that wholly relates to the rule of *admission* to the priesthood, and not to the priests' *assurance of their own right*. For, as I observed, if the priests had been never so fully assured of their pedigree, yet if they could not demonstrate it to others, by a public register, it would not have availed for their admission.

Again, in p. 124, Mr. Williams charges me with begging the question, in supposing that sacraments are duties of worship, whose very nature and design is an exhibition of those vital and active principles and inward exercises, wherein consists the condition of the covenant of grace. He charges the same thing as a begging the question, p. 131. But this is no begging the question, for two reasons; (1.) Because I had before proved this point, by proofs which Mr. Williams has not seen cause to attempt to answer, as has been just now observed, in the last section. (2.) This, when I wrote, was no point in question, wherein Mr. Williams and I differed; but wherein we were agreed, and in which he had declared himself as fully as I, in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 76: "When we attend sacraments (says he) we are therein visibly to profess our receiving Christ, and the graces of his Spirit, and the benefits of his redemption, on his own terms and offer, and giving up the all of our souls to him, on his call, covenant and engagement." And in the next preceding page but one, in a place forecited, he speaks of these acts "as mockery, hypocrisy, falsehood and lies, if they are not the expressions of faith and hope, and spiritual acts of obedience." So that I had no manner of need to come to

Mr. Williams as a beggar for these things, which he had so plentifully given me, and all the world that would accept them, years before.

SECTION VIII.

Showing how Mr. Williams begs the Question himself.

The question is certainly begged in that argument, which Mr. Williams espouses and defends, viz., "That the Lord's supper has a proper tendency to promote men's conversion." In the prosecution of the argument Mr. Williams implicitly yields, that it is not the apparent natural tendency alone, that is of any force to prove the point; but the apparent tendency under this circumstance, that *there is no express prohibition.* And thus it is allowed, that in the case of express prohibition with respect to the scandalous and morally insincere, no seeming tendency in the nature of the thing proves the ordinance to be intended for the conviction and conversion of such. So that it is a thing *supposed* in this argument, that all morally insincere persons are expressly forbidden, but unsanctified persons not so. Now when it is supposed, that morally insincere persons are expressly forbidden, the thing meant cannot be, that they are forbidden in those very words; for no such prohibition is to be found; nor are men that live in sodomy, bestiality and witchcraft, anywhere expressly forbidden in this sense. But the thing intended must be, that they are very evidently forbidden, by plain implication or consequence. But then the whole weight of the argument lies in this *supposition*, that unsanctified persons are not also plainly and evidently forbidden; which is the very point in question. And therefore, to make this the ground of an argument to prove this point, is a manifest *begging the question.* And what Mr. Williams says to the contrary, p. 127, that Mr. Stoddard had proved this point before, avails nothing: for let it be never so much proved before, yet after all, to take this very point and make use of it *as a further argument* to prove itself, is certainly *begging the question.* The notion of bringing a new argument is bringing additional proof: but to take a certain point, supposed to be already proved, to prove itself with over again, certainly does not add any thing to the evidence.

Mr. Williams says my supposing *unconverted* persons, as such, to be as evidently forbidden, as *scandalous* persons, is as much begging the question. I answer, so it would be, if I made that point an argument to prove itself with after Mr. Williams's manner. But this is far from being the case in fact.

And the question is again most certainly begged, in that other thing said to support this argument, viz., "That though the Lord's supper may seem to have a tendency to convert scandalous sinners, yet there is another ordinance appointed for that. Here the meaning must be, that there is another ordinance *exclusive* of the Lord's supper; otherwise it is nothing to the purpose. For they do not deny but that there are other ordinances for the conversion of sinners, who are morally sincere, as well as of those who are scandalous. But the question is, Whether other ordinances are appointed for their conversion *exclusive* of the Lord's supper; or, Whether the Lord's supper be one ordinance appointed for their conversion? This is the grand point *in question.* And to take this point as the foundation of an argument, to prove this same point, is plainly begging the question. And it is also giving up the argument from the tendency, and resting the whole argument on another thing

Mr. Williams again plainly begs the question in his Reply, p. 127, that God's prohibition is an argument, that God saw there was no such tendency for their conversion. His so saying supposes again, that there is no evident prohibition of unsanctified persons. In which he again flies to the very point in question, and rests the weight of his reasoning upon it.

Just in the same manner Mr. Williams begs the question in espousing and making use of that argument, "That all in the external covenant, and neither ignorant nor scandalous, are commanded to perform all external and covenant duties." Here it is supposed, that scandalous persons (which, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, must include all that have not moral sincerity), though in the external covenant, are expressly, that is, *evidently, excepted and forbidden:* and that unsanctified men are not also *evidently forbidden;* which is the point in question. For if unsanctified men, though in external covenant, are as evidently forbidden and excepted, as scandalous men that are in external covenant, then the argument touches not one any more than the other. So that the argument is entirely a castle in the air, resting on nothing. The grand thing to be proved, first taken for granted, and then made an argument to prove itself.

In explaining the nature of *begging the question*, I observed, that it is begging the question, or equivalent to it, whether the point that is taken for granted, and made an argument of, be the main point in controversy, or some particular known disputed point between the controverting parties. I will now illustrate this by an example, It is a known disputed point in this controversy, whether in the parable concerning the *man without the wedding garment*, the king condemned the man for coming into the church without *grace*. Now supposing that I, because I look on the matter very clear, should, besides using it as one distinct argument, also make it the basis of other arguments; and should use it in opposition to the strongest arguments of my opposers, as if it were sufficient to stop their mouths, without offering any proper solution of those arguments: as, in case I were pressed with the argument from the passover, if I should fly to the *man without the wedding garment;* and should say, it is certain, this argument from the passover can be of no force against the express word of God in the 22d of Matt. For there *it is plain as any fact that ever the sun shone upon*, that the king condemns the man for coming into the church *without a wedding garment;* and it is plain as the sun at noon-day, that the wedding garment is *grace*. And if when the argument from Judas's partaking of the Lord's supper is alleged, I should again fly to the *man without a wedding garment*, and say, whatever reasons Christ might have for admitting Judas, yet it is plainly revealed in Matt. xxii. 12, that God does not approve of men's coming into the church without a *wedding garment*. This would be an impertinent way of disputing, thus to answer one argument by throwing another in the way, which is contested, and the validity of which is denied. It is fair that I should have liberty to use the argument concerning the *wedding garment*, in its place, and make the most of it; but to use it as the support of other arguments, is to produce no additional proof. And thus from time to time, to produce the disputed hypothesis of one argument, for answer to the arguments of my antagonist, instead of solving those arguments, is flying and hiding from arguments, instead of answering them: instead of defending the fortress which is attacked, it is dodging and flying from one refuge to another.

Mr. Williams acts this part from time to time in the use he makes of his great argument from the Old Testament church and its ordinances. Thus, in p. 8, he takes this method to answer my argument from the nature of visibility and profession, insisting that the Israelites' avouching and covenanting was a

thing compatible with *ungodliness;* which he knows is disputed point in this controversy, and what I deny. Again he makes use of the same thing in answer to my argument from the nature of covenanting with God, p. 23, 24. And again he brings it in, p. 25, 26, answering what I say, by confidently asserting that concerning the church of Israel, which he knows is disputed, and I deny; viz., That the covenanting of Israel did not imply a profession that they did already believe and repent: as in these words, "This was never intended nor understood, in the profession which the Israelites made; but that they *would* immediately and from thenceforth comply with the terms of the covenant; and by the help of God, offered in it, *would* fulfil it. I am sure, this was what they professed; and I am sure, God declared he took them into covenant with him." And the same thing is brought in again to answer the same argument, p. 31. The same thing is thrown in, once and again, as an answer to what I say of the unreasonableness of accepting such professions as leave room to judge the greater part of the professors to be enemies of God, p, 34. The same thing is cast in as a sufficient block in the way of my arguing from the unreasonableness of accepting such professions, as amount to nothing more than *lukewarmness*, p. 36. The same is brought in, and greatly insisted on, to stop my mouth, in arguing from the epistles, p. 56, 57. The same is brought in again to enervate my argument concerning *brotherly love*, p. 69. And this is made use of as the support of other arguments; as that from the name *disciples*, and about the church's being the *school of Christ;* and to confute what I say, in answer to that argument, p. 84. The same is brought in as a support of the eleventh objection, and a confutation of my answer to that, p. 125. And again, in reply to what I say in answer to the nineteenth objection, p. 137.

Another thing, near akin to begging the question, is resting the weight of arguments on things asserted without proof; which, though they do not properly make a part of the controversy, yet are things not allowed by those on the other side. Thus does Mr. Williams in his arguing from the success of the Lord's supper in the conversion of sinners, p. 137, 138, supposing, not only that the Lord's supper has been the *occasion* of the conversion of many, but that their communicating was the *means* of it. This he offers nothing to prove, and it is not allowed by those on the other side.* And it is what would be very hard to prove: if many were converted *at* the Lord's table (which yet is not evident), it would not prove, that their *partaking* was the means of their conversion; it might be only what they saw and heard there, which others may see and hear that do not partake.

SECTION IX.

Mr. Williams's Inconsistence with himself, in what he says in answer to my third and fourth arguments, and in his reply to my arguments from the Acts, and the Epistles.

The *last* thing observed in Mr. Williams's way of disputing, is his alleging and insisting on things wherein he is inconsistent with himself. His inconsis-

* Thus that very eminent divine, and successful minister of Christ, the late Dr. Doddridge, in his *Sermons on Regeneration*, speaking of the means of regeneration, p. 251, 252, says. "I do not mention the administration of sacraments, upon this occasion; because, though they have so noble and effectual a tendency to improve men's minds in piety, and to promote Christian edification; yet I do not remember to have heard *of any instance*, in which they have been the *means* of men's *conversion*: which is not to be wondered at, as they are appointed for a very different end.

tencies are of many sorts: sometimes he alleges those things that are inconsistent with the doctrine of those whose principles he pretends to maintain: he abundantly urges those things against my scheme, which are in like manner against his own: he often argues against those things which he allows, and strenuously insists on: he denies what he affirms, and affirms what he utterly denies; laying down and urging those things which are contrary to what he says in other books; and sometimes contrary to what he says in the same book: yielding up the thing wherein the arguments lies, yet strenuously maintaining the argument; allowing both premises and consequence, yet finding fault, and opposing: sometimes urging things which are contrary to what he says under *different* arguments; and sometimes contrary to what he says under the *same* argument: sometimes contradicting himself in the plain sense and meaning of what he says; at other times even in plain terms: sometimes in effect contradicting himself in the same breath, and in the same sentence.

These various kinds of inconsistence have many of them been already observed: and will further appear by a particular consideration of what he says on several heads in what remains.

In my third argument, I insisted, that it could not be much to God's honor, for men to profess the assent of their judgment to the true religion, without pretending to any real friendship or love to God in their hearts. Mr. Williams, in opposition, p. 34, speaks of it as an honor to God, that secret hypocrites openly declare their conviction of the truth of God's word, &c., as *in the multitude of subjects is the king's honor.* And yet he himself represents the matter quite otherwise in his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness;* there, in p. 87, he has these words: "to promote the kingdom of Christ, is not to do that which may prevail with men to make pretences that they are Christians, or that they own Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and to call him Lord, Lord, when really he is not so."

In answer to my fourth argument, p. 35, Mr. Williams says, I make "a great misrepresentation of the matter, in insinuating that according to Mr Stoddard's scheme [which scheme he declares himself to be of], they who are admitted make a pretence of NO MORE than moral sincerity, and common grace." And yet he insists, that when Philip required a profession of the Eunuch's faith, his question designed NO MORE than an *assent of the understanding*, p. 51, which he there distinguishes from saving faith: and says, that it is morally certain that his inquiry *amounted to* NO MORE. And yet in his discourse on the same head, p. 49, he inveighs against me for supposing it a consequence of the opinion of my opposers, that the Eunuch, in order to come to sacraments, had no manner of need to look at any such qualification in himself as saving faith. Certainly the Eunuch, in making answer to Philip's inquiry, had no need to look at *any more* than Philip inquired after. In p. 50, he says, "It *does not* seem at all probable, that Philip *inquired any thing* about the regeneration or sanctification of the Eunuch." And yet in the next preceding sentence, he refers me over to another judgment, for representing as though my opposers supposed, that it was *no matter whether a person coming to gospel ordinances had any grace or not, and had no manner of need to inquire any thing about his sincerity.*

And though he highly blames me for insinuating, as above, that my opposers *require a pretence of* NO MORE *than common grace and moral sincerity;* yet in opposition to my insisting on a profession of saving faith, speaking of the profession which the apostles required, he says, p. 58, "It is certain, that a profession in these words, which was wont to be required, does sometimes import

NO MORE than a conviction of the understanding on moral evidence." So he says concerning those whose admission into the Christian church we have an account of in Acts ii. (p. 45), "There is not one word said about ANY OTHER FAITH, but believing that Jesus was the Messiah." And if so, then certainly NO MORE was professed.

In p. 35, he allows, that all visible saints who are not truly pious, are *hypocrites;* and yet maintains, that the profession they make is no more than what they may make and speak HONESTLY and TRULY, p. 105, and 47. How then are they all hypocrites, if they are *honestly and truly* what they profess to be?

In supporting the argument from John's baptism, he insists, that the profession the people made, did not imply, that they *had savingly repented:* and that John openly supposed, that their profession did *not* imply it, in what he said to them, p 97. And in p. 98, he says, "we read not a word of John's inquiring whether these people made a credible profession of true piety." And he there manifestly suggests, that John knew they were not pious, as *he knew they were a generation of vipers.* Yet how often elsewhere does Mr. Williams insist, that men in order to come to sacraments, *must* make a credible profession of true piety and gospel holiness, and that they must in a judgment of charity be supposed to have real godliness!

In answer to my argument from the instance of the converts in Acts ii., Mr. Williams, speaking of their convictions, and being *pricked in their heart*, p. 45, says, "They *were convinced that Jesus was the true Messiah* and Saviour, whom God had promised to Israel, whereupon convinced of their sin, they cry out, *What shall we do?* To which the apostle replies, *Repent and be baptized—in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.* There is not one word said about any other faith, but *believing that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah.* And in the two next pages Mr. Williams insists, that their *gladly receiving the word* can by no necessity from the text imply more, than that they now *believed that Jesus was the Messiah*, and that it was matter of joy to them that the *Messiah* was come. So that we have this *inconsistent* account of the matter from Mr. Williams. That these people are first *convinced that Jesus is the Messiah*, and this is cause of *distress* to them; and they ask, *what they shall do.* Hereupon the apostle directs them *to believe that Jesus is the Messiah;* which they believed *already*, before they asked the question: but however, when they heard this *they believed that Jesus was the Messiah;* they now found it out, as a *new* thing they did not know of before, and are *glad* at the joyful discovery; though just before they believed the same thing, and the discovery filled them with distress.

In p. 47, whereas it is said concerning these new converts, "that such were added to the church, as were *the saved*," Mr. Williams says, "the like appellation is given to the whole church of Israel." And in this and the foregoing page, he insists, that these converts were before *in* the church of Israel, and were not now *admitted*, but only continued as some of God's people. But if these things were so, they were *the saved* before their conversion to Christianity, as much as after; and others that were in the Jewish church, that were not yet converted to Christianity, were as much *the saved* as they. And then why is their being *saved* spoken of as what was now brought to pass, and as a thing that distinguished the believing Jews from others?

In the same page Mr. Williams says, "we do not dispute but that the apostles *supposed* and *believed* in charity, so far as they had any thing to do to suppose or believe any thing about it, that God had given these persons saving repentance, and a heart-purifying faith." And yet, in p. 61 he speaks of the

apostles as supposing the contrary of many of those that had been admitted into the primitive church; in that they speak of them as such *temples* of God as might be *destroyed:* "which (says Mr. Williams) cannot be true of sanctified persons, unless they can fall from grace."

In his answer to the argument from Philip and the Eunuch, he supposes, that *believing with all the heart* is only such a belief of the doctrine of Christianity as *unsanctified* men may have. And yet in that forementioned place, *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 144, he says, a man before he is "renewed by the Holy Ghost, has a view of the truth as a doubtful, uncertain thing" And in the book now especially attended to, he in effect owns the thing, which he earnestly disputes against in reply to this argument. He greatly insists, that the phrase, *with all the heart*, does not signify gracious sincerity; and yet he owns it does, p. 51 and 52: he owns, that according to the usual way of speaking *among mankind*, both in our days, and also in the times when the Scriptures were written, "GOD *requires* men to give him their hearts," "intending by it such a sincerity as God will own and accept; which besure (says he) is nothing else than a gracious sincerity; which never can be, unless the whole soul and all its faculties be engaged for God." Then afterwards adds, "But how will this any ways prove, that when *men* use the same expressions, it must necessarily be understood in the same sense?" And yet in the same breath, he had observed that God in thus using the phrase, uses it according to the usual manner of speaking AMONG MANKIND. He gives this reason why the phrase need not be understood in the same sense when used by men, that men are not searchers of hearts. But the argument is about the phrase as Philip put it to the Eunuch's own conscience, which was or ought to be a searcher of his heart.

And by the way I must observe, that Mr. Williams would have done well, if he was able, to have reconciled these repugnant things, taken notice of in my book; "That with the heart man believeth to righteousness, and that if men believe with the heart that God raised Christ from the dead, they shall be saved;" agreeable to Rom. x. 9, 10. And yet that men may "believe this with their heart, yea, and with all their heart, and still not believe to righteousness, nor ever be saved." So likewise, "That whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God;" as in 1 John iv. 15. And that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God," 1 John v. 1. And yet that man may believe this very thing with all his heart, and confess it with his mouth; and this in the language of the same apostles and primitive ministers; and still not *be born of God*, nor have a spark of grace in him.

It may also be worthy to be considered, whether it be reasonable to suppose, that the faith which a man must profess, in order to being in the visible kingdom of Christ, and not in the visible kingdom of the devil, must not be some *other* sort of faith than that which the devil has: that seeing the very design of a public profession of religion is to declare on which side we are, whether on Christ's or the devil's, no other faith is required to be professed, than such as Satan himself has, and such as is not at all inconsistent with being a "willing, cursed servant and slave of the devil, and enemy to Christ:" as Mr. Williams says, all unsanctified men are.

Mr. Williams, in his reply to my argument from the epistles, p. 55, speaks of it as an unaccountable thing, that I should represent as if, according to the principles of my opposers, the primitive Christians were not admitted "under any such notion of their being REALLY godly persons, or with any respect to

such a character:"* and yet in his discourse on the same head, he abundantly insists, that it was not REAL holiness, but only FEDERAL holiness, which was the qualification, which the apostles had reference to in admitting them; expressly from time to time, distinguishing *federal* holiness from *real*. In p. 56, and 57, "It makes it evident (says he) that this manner of treating churches and bodies of men, and such expressions used to them and of them, are to be understood in *no other sense*, than to signify FEDERAL holiness." So in p. 60, he affirms the same thing once and again, distinguishing *federal* holiness from *real*. He says, "They formed no positive judgment of their REAL piety. And knew nothing at all about them, but only that they were FEDERALLY holy." And again, "They did not make a positive judgment, that these persons were REALLY godly; and the high characters they gave them, and the hopes they expressed concerning them, could be understood in *no other sense* than as holding forth a FEDERAL holiness," So that by this they express no HOPES concerning any thing more than their *federal* holiness, as distinguished from *real*. And he argues earnestly through the two next pages, that they could not be looked upon, many of them, as having *real* holiness. How does this consist with their being treated as *visible saints; under the notion of their having* real holiness, *and from respect to such a character appearing on them?* Or with none's being visible saints, but such as have a credible visibility of gospel holiness?

So in p. 63, he speaks of the gross scandals of many of those the apostles wrote to, as an absolute proof, that they considered them only as *federally* holy; which he in the same place distinguishes from *real* holiness. Then how were they treated (as he insists) as those that "had the character of REAL PIETY appearing on them, and as making a credible profession of gospel holiness, and real Christianity?" Which he abundantly allows, all must make in order to being visible saints. See also p. 64.

In p. 58, Mr. Williams insists, that it does not appear, that those who are admitted into the primitive church, "made a declaration that they had saving faith, but ONLY that they engaged to that faith." But how does this consist with what he abundantly says elsewhere, that they must *pretend* to real piety, *make a profession* of gospel holiness, exhibit *moral evidence* that they have such holiness, &c.? These things are something else besides *engaging to* saving faith and gospel holiness *for the future.*

SECTION X.

The Unreasonableness and Inconsistency of Mr. Williams's Answer to my Argument from the Man without a Wedding Garment, and concerning Brotherly Love, and from 1 Cor. xi. 28, and of what he says in support of the fifteenth objection.

Mr. Williams, in answering my argument from Matt. xxii. 11, allows that the *king's house*, into which the guests came is the visible church, p. 43, 44. So that the man's *coming in hither*, is his coming into the visible church. Nor does he at all dispute but that by the *wedding garment* is meant saving grace (for truly the thing is too evident to be disputed): and yet he says, p. 43, "We read nothing of Christ's condemning the man for coming into the church without saving grace." So that Mr. Williams's answer amounts plainly to this.

* So in p. 132, he exclaims against me thus: "After all this, to repeat it again and again, that these persons have no visibility to reason of REAL saintship, &c., I think, gives better ground to retort Mr Edwards's words."

the king, when he comes to judgment, will say, I do not at all condemn thee for coming in hither without a wedding garment: but, friend, how camest thou in hither without a wedding garment? And no wonder; the case is too plain to allow of any other than such a lamentable refuge as this is. If the *wedding garment* be saving grace, which is not denied; and if coming into the *king's house* be coming into the visible church, as Mr. Williams owns: then if the king condemns the man for coming into the house without a wedding garment, he condemns him for coming into the visible church without saving grace.

It is plain, the thing the man is blamed for, is something else than simply *a being without grace*, or without a wedding garment. The king's words have respect to this as it stands in connexion with *coming into the king's house*. If Christ has commanded men who are *not converted*, to come into the church, that they may *be converted*, he will never say to them, upon their obeying this command, "Friend, how camest thou in hither before thou wast converted?" Which would be another thing than blaming him simply for not being converted. If a man, at his own cost sets up a school, in order to teach ignorant children to read; and accordingly ignorant children should go thither in order to learn to read, would he come into the school, and say in anger to an ignorant child that he found there; "How camest thou in hither before thou hast learnt to read?" Did the Apostle Paul ever rebuke the heathen, who came to hear him preach the gospel, saying, "How came you hither to hear me preach, not having grace?" This would have been unreasonable, because preaching is an ordinance appointed to that end, that men might obtain grace. And so in Mr. Williams's scheme is the *Lord's supper*. Can we suppose that Christ will say to men in indignation, at the day of Judgment, "How came you to presume to use the means I appointed for your conversion, before you were converted?"

It is true the servants were to invite all, *both bad and good*, to come to the feast, and to *compel them to come in;* but this does not prove, that bad men, *remaining* in their badness, have a lawful right to come. The servants were to invite the vicious as well as the moral; they were to invite the *heathen*, who were especially meant by them that were *in the highways and hedges:* yet it will not follow that the heathen, while remaining heathen, have a lawful right to come to Christian sacraments. But heathen men must turn from their heathenism, and come; so likewise wicked men must turn from their wickedness, and come.

I endeavored to prove, that *that brotherly love*, which is required towards the members of the *Christian church* in general, is such a love as is required to those *only* whom we have reason to look upon as true saints. Mr. Williams disputes, through two pages (p. 66, 67), against the force of my reasoning to prove this point; and yet when he has done, he allows the point. He allows it, p. 68, as an undisputed thing, that "it is the image of God and Christ appearing or supposed to be in others, that is the ground and reason of this love." And so again, p. 71, he grants, that "there must be some apprehension, and judgment of the mind, of the saintship of persons," in order to this brotherly love. Indeed he pretends to differ from me in this, that he denies the need of any *positive judgment:* but doubtless the judgment or apprehension of the mind must be as positive as the love founded on that apprehension and judgment of the mind.

In p. 78, 79, he seems to insist that what the apostle calls *unworthy communicating*, is eating in a greedy, disorderly and irreverent manner: as though men might communicate without grace, and yet not communicate *unworthily*, in the apostle's sense. But if so, the apostle differed much in his sense of things from Mr. Williams. The latter says, in his sermon on *Christ a King and*

Witness, p. 77, 78, "These outward acts of worship, when not performed from faith in Christ, and love to God, are *mocking* God; in their own nature a *lie*; the *vilest wickedness*; instead of being that religion, which Christ requires, it is *infinitely contrary* to it. The most *flagrant and abominable impiety, and threatened with the severest damnation.*" Is not this a communicating *unworthily* enough of all reason!

In p. 132, 133, Mr. Williams strenuously opposes me in my supposition, that the way of freely allowing all that have only *moral sincerity* to come into the church, tends to the reproach and ruin of the church. On the contrary he seems to suppose it tends to the establishing and building up of the church. But I desire that what Mr. Stoddard says, in his sermon on the *Danger of speedy Degeneracy*, may be considered under this head. He there largely insists, that the prevailing of unconverted men and unholy professors among a people, is the principal thing that brings them into danger of *speedy degeneracy* and corruption. He says, that "where this is the case, there will be many bad examples, that will corrupt others; and that unconverted men will indulge their children in evil, will be negligent in their education; and that by this means their children will be very corrupt and ungoverned;* that by this means the godly themselves that are among them, will be tainted, as sweet liquor put into a corrupt vessel will be tainted; that thus a people will grow blind, will not much regard the warnings of the word, or the judgments of God; and that they will grow weary of religious duties after a while; and that many of their leading men will be carnal; and that this will expose a people to have carnal ministers and other leading men in the town and church."

And I desire also that here may be considered what Mr. Williams himself says, in that passage forecited, p. 86, 87, of his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness;* where in explaining what it is to promote the kingdom of Christ, he says negatively, that "it is not to do that which may prevail on men to make pretences that they are Christians, and that they own Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and to *call him Lord, Lord*, when *really* he is not so." Which he supposes is the case with all unsanctified professors; for in the same book, he abundantly declares, that they who make such pretences and have not true faith and love, make *false* and *lying* pretences; as has been several times already observed.

SECTION XI

The impertinence of arguments, that are in like manner against the schemes of both the controverting parties: and this exemplified in what Mr. Williams says concerning the notion of Israel's being the People of God, and his manner of arguing concerning the Members of the primitive Christian Church.

Inasmuch as in each of the remaining instances of Mr. Williams's arguing, that I shall take notice of, he insists upon and urges arguments, which are in like manner against his own scheme, as against mine, I desire that such a way of arguing may be a little particularly considered.

And here I would lay down this as a maxim of undoubted verity —That an

* If we have reason to expect it will be thus with ungodly parents, with respect to their children, then certainly such cannot reasonably expect ministers and churches should admit their children to baptism, in a dependence that they do *give them up to God*, and *will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, if they make no profession that implies more than moral sincerity; and none but what wicked men may as well make as the godly, and speak true.

argument, brought to support one scheme against another, can avail nothing to the purpose it is brought for, if it is at the same time against the scheme it would *support*, in like manner as against that which it would *destroy*.

It is an old and approved maxim, "That argument which proves too much, proves nothing," i. e., if it proves too much for him that brings it, proves against himself in like manner as against his opponent, then it is nothing to help his cause. The reason of it is plain: the business of a dispute is to make one cause good against another, to make one scale heavier than the other. But when a man uses an argument which takes alike out of both scales, this does not at all serve to make his side preponderate, but leaves the balance just as it was.

Arguments brought by any man in a dispute, if they are not altogether impertinent, are against the difference between him and his opponent, or against his opponent's differing from him: for wherein there is no difference, there is no dispute. But that can be no argument against his opponent's differing from him, which is only an argument against what is common to both, and taken from some difficulty that both sides equally share in. If I charge supposed absurdities or difficulties against him that differs from me, as an argument to show the unreasonableness of his differing; and yet the difficulty is not owing to his differing from me, inasmuch as the same would lie against him, if he agreed with me, my conduct herein, is both very impertinent and injurious.

If one in a dispute insists on an argument, that lies equally against his own scheme as the other, and yet will stand to it that his argument is good, he in effect stands to it that his own scheme is not good; he supplants himself, and gives up his own cause, in opposing his adversary; in holding fast his argument, he holds fast what is his own overthrow; and in insisting that his *argument* is solid and strong, he in effect insists that his own *scheme* is weak and vain. If my antagonist will insist upon it that his argument is good, that he brings against *me*, which is in like manner against *himself*; then I may take the same argument, in my turn, and use it against him, and he can have nothing to answer; but has stopped his own mouth, having owned the argument to be conclusive.

Now such sort of arguments as these, Mr. Williams abundantly makes use of.

For instance, the argument taken from the whole nation of Israel's being called *God's people*, and every thing that Mr. Williams alleges, pertaining to this matter, is in like manner against his own scheme as against mine: and that, let the question be what it will; whether it be about the qualifications which make it lawful for the church to *admit*, or about the lawfulness of persons' *coming* to sacraments; whether it be about the *profession they should make before men*, or *the internal qualification they must have in the sight of God*. And what Mr. Williams says to the contrary, does not relieve the argument from this embarrassment and absurdity. After all he has said, in turning and twisting it, to save the force of it, the argument, if any thing related to the controversy, is plainly this, "That because the whole nation of Israel were God's *visible people* [which is the same as *visible saints*], therefore the Scripture notion of *visible saintship* is of larger extent than mine; and the Scripture supposes those to be visible saints, which my scheme does not suppose to be so.

But if this be Mr. Williams's argument, then let us see whether it agrees any better with his own scheme. Mr. Blake (Mr. Williams's great author) in his book on the *Covenant*, p. 190, insists that "Israel at the very *worst* is owned as God's covenant people, and were called God's people;" and p. 149, that

"all the congregation of Israel, and every one of them, are called holy and God's own people, even Korah and his company." And p. 253, 254, he urges that every one who is descended from Jacob, even the WORST of Israel, in their LOWEST state and condition, were God's people in covenant, called by the name of God's people." And Mr. Williams herein follows Mr. Blake and urges the same thing; that this nation was God's covenant people, and were called God's people, at the time that they were carried captive into Babylon, p. 24, when they were undoubtedly *at their worst*, more corrupt than at any other time we read of in the Old Testament; being represented by the prophets, as overrun with abominable idolatries, and other kinds of the most gross, heaven-daring impieties, most obstinate, abandoned, pertinacious and irreclaimable in their rebellion against God, and against his word by his prophets. But yet these, it is urged, are called the *people of God;* not agreeable to *my* notion of visible saintship, but agreeable to Mr. Williams's. What his notion of *visible saints* is, he tells us in p. 139. He there says expressly that he "does not suppose persons to be visible saints, unless they exhibit a credible profession and visibility of gospel holiness." Now do those things said about those vile wretches in Israel agree with this? Did they exhibit moral evidence of *gospel holiness?* But if we bring the matter lower still, and say, the true notion of visible saintship is a credible appearance and moral evidence of *moral sincerity;* does this flagrant, open, abandoned, obstinate impiety, consist with moral evidence of such sincerity as that? It is as apparent therefore, in Mr. Williams's scheme as mine, that when these are called God's people, it is in some other sense than that wherein the members of the Christian church are called *visible saints.* And indeed the body of the nation of Israel, in those corrupt times, were so far from being God's church of visibly pious persons, visibly endowed with *gospel holiness*, that *that* people, as to the body of them, were visibly and openly declared by God, to be a *whore* and a *witch*, and her children *bastards*, or *children of adultery.* Isa. lvii. 3, "Draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore." We have the like in other places. And so the body of the same people in Christ's time (which Mr. Williams supposes even then to be branches of the *true olive*, in the same manner as the members of the Christian church were in the apostles' times), are visibly declared not to be God's children, or children of the true church, but bastards, or an adulterous brood. Matt. xii. 39, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Ver. 45, "Even so shall it be with this wicked generation." And certainly the people were then, visibly and in the eyes of men, such as Christ had visibly and openly and in the sight of men declared them to be.

If the question be not concerning the *visibility* which makes it *lawful for others to admit persons*, but concerning the *qualifications which render it lawful for them to come*, still the objection is no more against *my* scheme, than against Mr. Williams's. He, in p. 84, 85 and 86, says, that "such openly scandalous persons ought not to be admitted into the church;" insinuating, that these scandalous people among the Jews were otherwise when they were admitted at first: but that being taken in, and not cast out again, *it was lawful for them to be there*, and they had a lawful right to the privileges of the church. But this supposition, that all that are lawfully admitted by others, may lawfully come into the church, and lawfully continue to partake of its privileges *till cast out*, is utterly inconsistent with Mr. Williams's own scheme. For according to his scheme, it is not lawful for men that are not *morally sincere*, to partake of the privileges of the church; but yet such may, in some cases, be lawfully admitted by others; for he maintains, that in admitting them, they are not to act as *search-*

ers of hearts, even with regard to their moral sincerity; and so argues, *p.* 106, that Christ might give Judas the sacrament, when not morally sincere. If Christ, as head of the visible church might admit Judas to his table, when he knew he was not morally sincere, and when it was not lawful for Judas himself to come; then it is lawful for men to admit some, for whom it is not lawful to be there; contrary to Mr. Williams's assertion in p. 86.

It is true, that persons may become grossly scandalous, after having been regularly admitted on Mr. Williams's principles, on a profession in words of indiscriminate signification. And so they may, after being regularly admitted, according to my principles, on a credible profession of gospel holiness in words of a determinate meaning: and therefore, the gross wickedness of such apostates as we read of in Scripture, is no more an objection against my principles, than his.

Just in the same manner is Mr. Williams's arguing, p. 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, concerning the members of churches mentioned in the epistles, equally against his own scheme and mine. He largely insists upon it, that the apostle speaks of many of them as grossly scandalous, notoriously wicked persons, idolaters, heretics, fornicators, adulterers, adulteresses, &c. &c. In his arguing from these things, he is inconsistent with his own principles, two ways. (1.) Such a character is as plainly inconsistent with the character he insists on as necessary to render it lawful for persons to come to sacraments, as mine. And, (2.) It is utterly inconsistent with what he often declares to be his notion of visible saintship, necessary to a being admitted by others; so no more an argument against my opinion of visible saintship, than his own.

SECTION XII.

The great Argument from the Jewish Sacraments, of the Passover and Circumcision, considered.

As has been observed concerning the argument from the Jewish nation, so the argument from the Jewish ordinances, if it be against my scheme, is as plainly, in every respect, against Mr. Williams's.

This grand argument, as plainly expressed, or implied in Mr. Stoddard's words (which Mr Williams insists I should attend to), is this:

God did expressly command all the nation of Israel to be *circumcised;* and he also expressly commanded the whole nation to come to the *passover;* excepting such as were ceremonially unclean, or on a journey. Therefore it was lawful for unsanctified men to come. (See Mr. Stoddard's sermon on the *Controv.*, p. 8, and *Appeal*, p. 51.) The want of sanctification never was alleged by any man as a reason for forbearing the passover, *Appeal*, p. 51. Unsanctified persons' attending this ordinance is never charged on them as a sin in Scripture, *Ibid.* Jesus Christ himself partook of the passover with Judas; which proves it to be lawful for unsanctified men to come to the passover. But such as might lawfully come to the passover, may lawfully come to the Lord's supper.

Now let us consider what are the qualifications, which are necessary, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, to a lawful coming to Christian sacraments; and then see whether this objection, in every part of it, and every thing that belongs to it, be not as plainly and directly against his own scheme, as mine.

According to Mr. Williams, it is not lawful for a man to come, unless he is *morally sincere*, *Pref.*, p. 2, 3, 21, 25, 30, 35, 36, 111, 115. And, according as he has explained this moral sincerity, which is necessary in order to come to sacraments, it implies "a real conviction of the judgment and conscience of the truth of the great things of religion; a deep conviction of a man's undone state without Christ, and an earnest concern to obtain salvation by him; a fervent desire of Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace, with an earnest purpose and resolution to seek salvation on the terms of it; a man's being willing to do the utmost that he can, by the utmost improvement of his natural and moral power, in the most earnest and diligent use of the ordinances of salvation; being resolved for Christ, coming to a point, being engaged for heaven; having a settled determination of the judgment and affections for God; giving up all his heart and life to Christ, &c. &c."* Such moral sincerity as this is necessary, according to Mr. Williams, to be found in professing Christians, in order to their lawful coming to Christian sacraments. And he says they are received into the church, "on like terms, by entering into covenant in like manner, as the Jews; and that their holiness, both real and federal, is the same with theirs, p. 56, 57, 61, 65. So that according to this scheme, none but those that had such qualifications as these, such a sincerity and engagedness in religion as this, might lawfully come to the passover. But now do the things alleged agree any better with this his scheme, than with mine? If the case be so, to what purpose is it alleged, that God, in Numb. chap. ix., expressly commanded all of that perverse, rebellious and obstinate generation in the wilderness, and the whole nation of Israel, in all generations, to keep the *passover*, excepting such as were ceremonially unclean or on a journey, without the exception of any other? Was every one else of such a character as is above described? Was every one under deep convictions, and persons of such earnest engagedness in religion, of such settled, strong resolution to give up their utmost strength and all their heart and life to God, &c.? Mr. Williams suggests, that "those who had not moral sincerity are expressly excepted from the command," p. 93. But I wish he had mentioned the place of Scripture. He cites Mr. Stoddard, who says, "God appointed sacrifice to be offered for scandal, with confession." But where did God appoint sacrifice for the *want* of such sincerity, for the *want* of such deep conviction, earnest desire, and fixed resolution, as Mr. Williams speaks of? And where are such as are without these things *expressly excepted* from the command to keep the passover? And besides there were many scandalous sins, for which *no sacrifice* was appointed: as David's murder and adultery, and the sin of idolatry (which the nation in general often fell into), and many other gross sins. Nor was there any precept for *deferring* the keeping of the passover, in case of scandalous wickedness, or moral uncleanness, until there should be opportunity for cleansing by *sacrifice*, &c., as was in the case of ceremonial uncleanness.

Mr. Stoddard says, "The want of sanctification was never alleged by any man as a reason for forbearing the passover." So, where do we read in any part of the Bible, that ever the *want* of such deep conviction, &c., as Mr. Williams speaks of, or indeed any scandalous moral uncleanness, was ever alleged by any man as a reason for forbearing to eat the passover? Mr. Stoddard urges that unsanctified persons attending the passover was never charged on them as a *sin*. And where do we read of persons' coming without such *moral sincerity* being any more charged on them as a *sin*, than the other? We have reason

* P 10, 11, 30, 31, 35, 36, 53, 83, 125, and many other places.

to think, it was a common thing for parents that had no such moral sincerity, yea, that were grossly and openly wicked, to have their children *circumcised*; for the body of the people were often so: but where is this charged as a *sin?* Mr. Stoddard says (Serm. p. 7), Ishmael was circumcised, but yet a carnal person. And there is as much reason to say, he was *not* of the character Mr. Williams insists on, "under deep convictions, having earnest desires of grace, a full and fixed determination, with all his heart, to the utmost of his power, to give his whole life to God," &c. Mr. Stoddard says (Serm. p. 8), Hezekiah sent to invite the people of Ephraim and Manasseh, and other tribes, to celebrate the passover, though they had lived in idolatry for some ages." But if so, this was as much of an evidence, that they were not of such a character as Mr. Williams insists on, as that they were without sanctifying grace. Mr. Williams says, p. 91, "The Israelites had carefully attended the seal of circumcision, from the time of its institution, till the departure out of Egypt." But surely most of them at the same time were without Mr. Williams's moral sincerity; for it is abundantly manifest, that the body of the people fell away to idolatry in Egypt. See Lev. xvii. 7, Josh. xxiv. 14, Ezek. xx. 8, and xxiii. 3, 8, 27. And there is not the least appearance of any more *exception*, either in the precepts or history of the Old Testament, of the case of *moral sincerity*, in such as attended these ordinances, than of ungodliness, or an unsanctified state.

Mr. Stoddard urges that "Jesus Christ himself partook of the passover, with Judas;" and thence he would argue that it was lawful for an *unregenerate* person to partake of the Lord's supper. But there can be no argument, in any sort, drawn from this to prove that it is lawful for men to partake of the Lord's supper without *sanctifying grace*, any more than that it is lawful for them to partake without *moral sincerity:* for it is every whit as evident, that Judas was at that time without moral sincerity, as that he was unregenerate. We have no greater evidence, in all the Scripture history, of the moral insincerity of any one man than Judas, at the time when he partook of the passover with Christ; he having just then been and bargained with the high priest, to *betray* him, and being then in prosecution of the horrid design of the murder of the Son of God.

If any thing contrary to my principles could be argued from all Israel's being required, throughout their generations, to come to the *passover* and *circumcision*, it would be this; that all persons, of all sorts, throughout all Christendom, might lawfully come to *baptism* and the *Lord's supper;* godly and ungodly, the knowing and the ignorant, the moral and the vicious, orthodox and heretical, Protestants and Papists alike. But this does not agree with Mr. Williams's principles, any better than with mine.

SECTION XIII.

Concerning Judas's partaking of the Lord's Supper.

I think, we have a remarkable instance of tergiversation, in what Mr. Williams says in support of the argument from Judas's partaking of the Lord's supper. By those on his side of the question, it is insisted upon, as a clear evidence of its being lawful for unsanctified men to come to the Lord's table, that Christ gave the Lord's supper to Judas, when he knew he was unsanctified. In answer to which, I showed, that this is just as much against their own princi-

ples, as mine; because Christ knew as perfectly that he was not *morally sincere*, as that he was not *graciously sincere;* and they themselves hold, that it is not lawful for such as are not morally sincere, to partake. Mr. Williams ridicules this, as very impertinent and strange; because "Christ did not know this as head of the visible church, but only as omniscient God and searcher of hearts." And what does this argue? Only, that although Judas was really not fit to come, yet inasmuch as Christ, acting as king of the visible church, did not know it, he *might admit him:* but not that it was *lawful for Judas himself to come*, who knew his own heart in this matter, and knew his own perfidiousness and treachery; for Mr. Williams denies, that it is lawful for such to come, as have no moral sincerity. So that here the question is changed, from "Who may lawfully come?" to "Who may lawfully be admitted?" Mr. Williams does abundantly, in his book, insist that the question is not, "Who shall be admitted? but who may lawfully come?" Not, whether it be lawful to admit those who have not a visibility of saintship, or do not appear to be true saints? But whether those who are not true saints, may lawfully partake? And this he insists upon in his discourse on this very argument, p. 104. And to prove this latter point, viz., that "those who are not real saints, may lawfully come," the instance of Judas's coming to the Lord's supper is produced as an undeniable evidence. But when it is answered, that the argument does not prove this, any more than that the morally insincere may lawfully come; because Judas was morally insincere: then Mr. Williams, p. 106, to shelter himself, dodges, and evidently changes the question at once, to that which he had so much exclaimed against as *not the question*. Now, to serve his turn, the question is not whether *Judas might lawfully come?* But, whether *Christ might lawfully admit him*, acting on a public visibility? And he makes an occasion to cry out of me, as talking *strangely*, and soon forgetting that I had said, Christ, in this matter, did not act as searcher of hearts. Whereas, let the question be what it will, the argument from Judas's partaking (should the fact be supposed), if it proves any thing relating to the matter, is perfectly and in every respect, against the one, just as it is against the other. If the question be about *profession* and *visibility* to others, and whom others may *lawfully admit*, then Judas's being admitted (if he was admitted) no more proves that men may be admitted without a visibility and profession of godliness, than without a visibility of moral sincerity. For it no more appears, that he was without a profession and visibility of the former, than of the latter. But if the question is not about *visibility to others*, or who others *may admit*, but who may *lawfully come*, then Judas's coming no more proves, that a man may come without grace, than without moral sincerity; because he was in like manner without both: and Christ *knew* as perfectly, that he was without the one, as the other; and was not ignorant of the one case, as king of the visible church, any more than of the other. So that there is no way to support this argument, or to make any thing at all of it; but the only way left is, to hide the question, by shifting and changing it; to have one question in the premises, and to slip in another into the conclusion. Which is according to the course Mr. Williams takes. In the premises, p. 104, 105, he expressly mentions Mr. Stoddard's question, as now in view; and agreeably must here have this for his question, "Whether it was lawful for a man so qualified to come to the Lord's supper?" Who, according to Mr. Williams's own doctrine, p. 111, ought to act as a discerner of his own heart. But in his conclusion, p. 106, he has this for his question, "Whether Christ might lawfully ADMIT a man so qualified," therein not acting as the searcher of hearts? —What shuffling is this!

SECTION XIV

Concerning that great Argument, which Mr. Williams urges in various parts of his Book, of those being born in the church, who are Children of Parents that are in Covenant.

It is hard to understand distinctly what Mr. Williams would be at, concerning this matter, or what his argument is. He often speaks of parents that are in covenant, as *born in covenant*, and so *born in the church*. (For to be in covenant, is the same with him as to be members of the visible church. See p. 98, 88, 89, 59, 60, 136.) And he speaks of them as admitted into the church in their *ancestors*, and by the *profession* of their ancestors, p. 135, 136. Yea, for ought I can see, he holds that they were *born members in* COMPLETE STANDING *in the visible church*, p. 3.

And yet he abundantly speaks of their being ADMITTED into the church, and MADE members, after they are born, viz., by their baptism. And his words (unless we will suppose him to speak nonsense) are such as will not allow us to understand him, merely, that baptism is a *sign and public acknowledgment* of their having been admitted in their ancestors, in preceding generations. For he speaks of baptism as "the ONLY rite (or way) of admission into the visible church," applying it to the baptism of children; and as that which "MAKES them members of the body of Christ," p. 99. And he grants, that "it was ordained for the ADMISSION of the party baptized into the visible church," p. 99, 100. That "baptism is an admission; and that they were thus before admitted," p. 100, still speaking of the baptism of infants, and of admission of members into churches. But surely these things do not harmonize with the doctrine of their first receiving being in the church (as a branch receives being in the tree, and grows in it and from it), or their being *born in the covenant, born in the house of God*. And yet these repugnant things are uttered as it were in the same breath by Mr. Williams, p. 99. And he joins them together in the same line, p. 46, in these words: "Baptism instituted by him, as a rite of ADMISSION into his church, and being CONTINUED in covenant with God." Certainly a being then *admitted* into the church, and a being *continued* in covenant (or in the church) into which they were admitted *before*, are not the same thing, nor consistent one with another. If infants are born members in *complete standing*, as it seems Mr. Williams holds, then their baptism does nothing towards *making* them members; nor is there any need of it to make the matter more *complete*.

Again, in p. 3 (the same page where he speaks of infants as members having a complete standing in the church), he maintains, that nothing else is requisite in order to "communion and privileges of members in complete standing, but only that they should be capable hereof, and should desire the same, and should not be under censure, or scandalously ignorant or immoral." See also p. 100, to the same purpose. Mr. Williams says this in opposition to my insisting on something further, viz., making a profession of godliness. And yet he himself insists on something further, as much as I; which has been observed before. For he abundantly insists on a *personal, explicit profession and open declaration* of believing that the gospel is indeed the revelation of God, and of a hearty consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, &c. And speaks of the whole controversy as turning upon that single point, of the degree of evidence to be given, and the kind of profession to be made, whether in words of indiscriminate meaning? See p. 5, 6. And consequently not, whether they

must make any profession at all, having been completely admitted before, in the profession of their ancestors?

Therefore, if it be so, that the infants of visible believers are born in the church, and are already members in complete standing, and do not drop out of the church, and fall from a complete standing, when they grow up; and therefore if they are not ignorant nor immoral, and desire full communion, *nothing else* can be required of them: and it will hence follow, contrary to *my* principles, that they cannot be required to make a profession in words of *discriminate* meaning: but then, it also equally follows, contrary to *his* principles, that neither can they be required to make a profession in words of *indiscriminate* meaning. If nothing else besides those forementioned things is necessary, then *no profession* is necessary, in any words at all, neither of determinate nor indeterminate signification. So that Mr. Williams, in supposing some personal profession to be necessary, gives up and destroys this his grand argument.

But if he did not give it up by this means, it would not be tenable on other principles belonging to *his* scheme; such as its being necessary in order to a being admitted to sacraments, that persons should have a visibility that recommends them to the reasonable judgment and apprehension of the minds of others, as true Christians, really pious persons, and that there should be such a profession as exhibits moral evidence of this. For who will say, that the individual profession of an ancestor, a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago, is a credible exhibition and moral evidence of the real piety of his present posterity, without any personal, explicit profession of any thing about religion, in any one of the succeeding generations? And if Mr. Williams had not said, there must be a credible exhibition of *gospel holiness*, but only some common faith or virtue; yet no such thing is made visible to a rational judgment and apprehension of mind, by this means. How, for instance, does it make *orthodoxy* visible? What reasonable ground is there in it, at such a day as this in England, to believe concerning any man, that he believes the doctrine of the Trinity, and all other fundamental doctrines, with full conviction, and with all his heart, because he descended from an ancestor that made a good profession, when the ancient Britons or Saxons were converted from heathenism, and because withal he is free from open, scandalous immorality, and appears willing to attend duties of public worship? If an attendance on these public duties was in its own nature a profession of orthodoxy, or even piety; yet the reason of mankind teaches them the need of joining *words and actions* together in public manifestations of the mind, in cases of importance: *speech* being the great and peculiar talent, which God has given to mankind, as the special means and instrument of the manifestation of their minds one to another. Thus treaties of peace among men are not concluded and finished with actions only, without words. Feasting together was used of old, as a testimony of peace and covenant friendship; as between Isaac and Abimelech, Laban and Jacob, but not without a verbal profession. Giving the hand, delivering the ring, &c., are to express a marriage agreement and union; but still a profession in words is annexed. So we allow it to be needful, after persons have fallen into scandal, that in manifesting repentance there should be a verbal profession, besides attending duties of worship. Earthly princes will not trust a profession of allegiance, in actions only, such as bowing, kneeling, keeping the king's birth day, &c., but they require also a profession in words, and an oath of allegiance is demanded. Yea, it is thought to be reasonably demanded, in order to men's coming to the actual possession and enjoyment of those privileges they are *born heirs to*. Thus, the eldest sons of noblemen in Great Britain, are born heirs to

the honors and estate of their fathers; yet this no way hinders but they may be obliged when they come to ripeness of age, in order to a being invested in the actual possession, to take the oath of allegiance: though in order to their lawfully doing it, it may be necessary they should believe in their hearts, that king George is the lawful prince, and that they should not be enemies to him, and friends to the pretender, in their hearts.

But moreover, if this objection of Mr. Williams about infants being born in the church be well considered, it will appear to be all *beside the question*, and so nothing to the purpose. It is not to the purpose of either of the questions, Mr. Williams's or mine. The question as I have stated it, is concerning them that may be *admitted* members in complete standing; not about them that have a complete standing in the church *already*, and so are no candidates for admission; which he says is the case of these infants. And the question as *he* often states it, is concerning them that may *lawfully come:* and this objection, from infants' being *born in the church*, as it must be understood from Mr Williams, does not touch this question. For when Mr. Williams objects, that some persons are born in the church, and therefore may lawfully come to sacraments, he cannot be understood to mean, that their being *born* in the church *alone* is sufficient; but that, besides this, persons must have some virtue or religion, of one sort or other, in order to their lawful coming. For he is full in it, that it is not lawful for men to come without moral virtue or sincerity. Therefore the question comes to this in the result: seeing persons, besides their being born in covenant, must have some sort of virtue and religion in order to a lawful coming to the Lord's supper, *What sort* of virtue and religion *that* is, whether *common* or *saving?* Now this question is not touched by the present objection. Merely persons' being *born* in covenant, is no more evidence of their having moral sincerity, than saving grace. Yea, there is more reason to suppose the latter, than the former without it, in the infant children of believing parents. For the Scripture gives us ground to think, that some infants have the habit of saving grace, and that they have a new nature given them; but no reason at all to think, that ever God works any mere moral change in them, or refuses any habits of moral virtue without saving grace: and we know, they cannot come by moral habits in infancy, any other way than by immediate infusion: they cannot obtain them by human instruction, nor contract them by use and custom. And especially there is no reason to think, that the children of such as are visible saints, according to Mr. Williams's scheme, have any goodness infused into them by God, of any kind. For in his scheme, all that are morally sincere may lawfully receive the privileges of visible saints: but we have no Scripture grounds to suppose, that God will bless the children of such parents as have nothing more than moral sincerity, with either common or saving grace. There are no promises of the covenant of grace made to such parents, either concerning themselves or their children. The covenant of grace is a conditional covenant; as both sides in this controversy suppose: and therefore, by the supposition, men have no title to the promises without the condition. And as saving faith is the condition, the promises are all made to *that*, both those which respect persons themselves, and those that respect their seed. As it is with many covenants or bargains among men; by these, men are often entitled to possessions for themselves and their heirs: yet they are entitled to no benefits of the bargain, neither for themselves, nor their children, but by complying with the terms of the bargain. So with respect to the covenant of grace, the apostle says, Acts ii. 39, "The promise is to you and to your children." So the apostle says to the jailer, Acts xvi. 31, "Believe on

the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." And we find many promises, all over the Bible, made to the righteous, that God will bless their seed for their sakes. Thus, Psal. cxii. 2, "The generation of the upright shall be blessed." Psal. lxix. 35, 36, "For God will save Zion: the seed also of his servants shall inherit it; and they that love his name shall dwell therein." See also Prov. xiv. 26; Psal. ciii. 17, 18; cii. 28; Exod. xx. 5, 6; Deut. vii. 9. Supposing these to be what are called indefinite promises; yet do they extend to any but the *seed of the righteous?* Where are any such promises made to the children of unsanctified men, the enemies of God, and slaves to the devil (as Mr. Williams owns all unsanctified men are), whatever moral sincerity, and common religion they may have?

The baptism of infants is the seal of these promises made to the seed of the righteous: and on these principles, some rational account may be given of infant baptism; but no account can be given of it on Mr. Williams's scheme, no warrant can be found for it in Scripture; for they are *promises* that are the warrant for *privileges*: but there are no promises of God's word to the seed of morally sincere men, and only half Christians.

Thus this argument of Mr. Williams's, let us take it which way we will, has nothing but what is as much, yea, much more, against his scheme, than against mine.

However, if this were not the case, but all the show or pretence of strength there is in the argument, lay directly and only against *me*, yet the strength of it, if tried, will avail to prove nothing. The pretended argument, so far as I can find out what it is, is this: *The children of visible saints are born in covenant; and being already in covenant, they must have a right to the privileges of the covenant, without any more ado: such therefore have a right to come to the Lord's supper, whether they are truly godly, or not.*

But the show of argument there is here, depends on the ambiguity of the phrase, *being in covenant;* which signifies two distinct things: either (1,) *being under the obligations and bonds of the covenant;* or (2,) *a being conformed to the covenant, and complying with the terms of it.* A being the subject of the obligations and engagements of the covenant, is a thing quite distinct from a being conformed to these obligations, and so being the subject of the condition of the covenant.

Now it is not a being in covenant in the former, but the latter sense, that gives a right to the privileges of the covenant. The reason is plain, because it is compliance and conformity to the terms of a covenant, that is the thing which gives right to all the benefits; and not merely a being under ties to that compliance and conformity. Privileges are not annexed merely to obligations, but to compliance with obligations.

Many that do not so much as visibly comply with the conditions of the covenant, are some of God's covenant people in *that* sense, that they are under the bonds and engagements of the covenant; so were Korah and his company; so were many gross idolaters, in Israel, that lived openly in that sin; and so may heretics, deists, and atheists be God's covenant people; they may still be held under the bonds of their covenant engagements to God; for their great wickedness and apostasy do not free them from the obligation of the solemn promises and engagements they formerly entered into. But yet a being in covenant merely in this sense, gives them no right to any privileges of the covenant. In order to that, they must be in covenant in another sense; they must cordially consent to the covenant: which indeed Mr. Williams himself owns, when he acknowledges, that in order to come to sacraments, men must profess a cordial consent to, and compliance with the conditions of the covenant

of grace.* And if Mr. Williams inquires, why those children that were born in the covenant are not *cast out*, when in adult age they make no such profession; certainly it as much concerns *him* to answer, as me; for it is as much his doctrine, as mine, that they must profess such consent. But I am willing to answer nevertheless. They are not cast out because it is a matter held in suspense, whether they do cordially consent to the covenant, or not; or wheth er their making no such profession does not arise from some other cause. And none are to be excommunicated, without some positive evidence against them. And therefore they are left in the state they were in, in infancy, not admitted actually to partake of the Lord's supper (which actual participation is a new positive privilege) for want of a profession, or some evidence, beyond what is merely negative, to make it visible that they do consent to the covenant. For it is reasonable to expect some appearance more than what is negative, of a proper qualification, in order to being admitted to a privilege beyond what they have hitherto actually received. A negative charity may be sufficient for a negative privilege, such as freedom from censure and punishment; but something more than a negative charity, is needful to actual admission to a new positive privilege.

SECTION XV.

A particular Examination of Mr. Williams's Defence of the 9th Objection, or that boasted Argument, that if it be not lawful for unconverted Men to come to the Lord's Supper, then none may come but they that know themselves to be converted.

This argument has been greatly gloried in, as altogether invincible. Mr Williams seems to have been alarmed, and his spirits raised to no small degree of warmth at the pretence of an answer to it: and he uses many big words, and strong expressions in his reply; such as, "It is absolutely certain—It is beyond my power to comprehend, and I believe beyond the power of any man to tell me.—This I assert and stand to—As plain as the sun—A contradiction of the Bible, of the light of nature, and of the common sense of mankind," &c. &c. But let us get away from the noise of a torrent, and bring this matter to the test of calm reasoning, and examine it to the very bottom.

Here let it be considered, wherein precisely the argument consists.—If it has any strength in it, it consists in this proposition, viz., *That it is not lawful for men to come to sacraments, without a known right.* This is the proposition Mr. Stoddard himself reduces the argument to, in his *Appeal*, p. 62, 63. And it is very evident, that the whole strength of the argument rests on the supposed truth of this proposition.

And here let it be noted, what sort of *knowledge* of a right Mr. Stoddard, and so Mr. Williams, means in this argument. It is *knowledge* as distinguished from such an *opinion*, or *hope*, as is *founded in probability.* Thus Mr. Stoddard expressly insists, that a man must not only THINK he has a right, but he must KNOW it. *Appeal.* p. 62. And again, p. 63, he says, *probable hopes will not warrant him to come.*

Mr. Williams uses many peremptory, strong expressions, p. 109, to set forth the certainty of that which never was denied; viz., that *a man cannot know he has a right, unless he knows he has the qualification which gives him a right.* But this is not the thing in question: the point is, *whether a man may not have*

* If it be said here, those who have been born of baptized ancestors, though they do not comply with the terms of the covenant, are in covenant, in this sense, that they have a right to the promises of the covenant *conditionally*, in case they will hereafter comply: I answer, so are all mankind in covenant God may be said to have bound himself conditionally to them all; and many have these promises declared to them, that still remain Jews, Mahometans, or Heathens

a lawful right, or may not lawfully come, and yet *not know his right, with such a knowledge and evidence as is beyond all probability?* This is the thing asserted, and herein lies the argument. And the negative of this cannot be stood to and maintained, in order to maintain Mr. Williams's scheme, without the grossest absurdity; it being a position which, according to Scripture, reason, and Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, and Mr. Williams's own, effectually destroys his scheme

To this purpose I observed, if this proposition be true, that no man may come, save he which not only thinks, but *knows* he has a right, then it will follow, that no unconverted person may come, unless he *knows* that doctrine to be true, *that unconverted men may have a right.* Because an unconverted man cannot know that one in particular (viz., he himself), who is an unconverted man, has a right, unless he knows that doctrine which Mr. Stoddard maintained, to be true, viz., that men may have a right, though they are unconverted. And consequently no one unconverted man may lawfully come to the Lord's supper, unless he is so knowing in this point of controversy, as not only to think, and have probable evidence, that this opinion is right, but *knows* it to be so. Mr. Williams endeavors to help the matter by a distinction of different kinds of knowledge: and by the help of this distinction would make it out, that common people in general, and even boys and girls of sixteen years old, may with ease know that his doctrine about unsanctified men's lawfully coming to the Lord's supper, is true. And we must understand him (as he is defending Mr Stoddard's argument) that they may know it with that evidence that is distinguished from probability; and this according to Mr. Williams himself, is *certainty;* which he speaks of as above *a thousand probabilities.* See p. 118. But how miserable is this! To pretend that this doctrine about qualifications for sacraments, is so far from a disputable point, that it is of such plain and obvious evidence, to common people and even children, that without being studied in divinity, they may not only *think* it to be *exceeding probable,* but *know* it to be *true!* When it is an undeniable fact, that multitudes of the greatest ability and piety, that have spent their lives in the study of the holy Scriptures, have never so much as *thought so.*

Again, I observed, that according to Mr. Stoddard's doctrine, *not one* unconverted man in the world can *know* that he has *warrant* to come to the Lord's supper; because if he has any warrant, God has given him warrant in the *Scriptures;* and therefore if any unconverted man, not only *thinks,* but *knows,* that he has warrant from God, he must of consequence not only *think,* but *know* the Scriptures to be the word of God. Whereas it was the constant doctrine of Mr. Stoddard, that no unconverted man *knows* the Scriptures to be the word of God.* But Mr. Williams would make it out, that Mr. Stoddard did hold, unconverted men might *know* the Scriptures to be the word of God; but only not know it with "a gracious knowledge, such as effectually bowed men's hearts, and influenced them to a gracious obedience," p. 113. But let us see whether it was so, or not. Mr. Stoddard in his *Nature of saving Conversion,* p. 73. says, "The carnal man is *ignorant* of the divine authority of the word of God; —his wound is, that he *does not know certainly* the divine authority of these institutions; he *does not know* but they are the inventions of men." Again, *Ibid.* p. 74, he says, "The carnal man is *uncertain* of those things that are the foundation of his reasonings. He thinks there is *a great probability* of the truth of these things; but he has *no assurance.* His principles are grounded on an

* I did not say, that it was also a doctrine according to Scripture; for there was no occasion for this, among those with whom I had chiefly to do in this controversy; with whom I knew it was a point as much settled and uncontroverted, as any doctrine of Mr. Stoddard whatever. And I knew it to be the current doctrine of orthodox divines; who ever allow this doctrine to be implied in such texts as those, John xvii. 7 1 John iv. 14, 16, chap. v. 1, 10, and many other places.

uncertain proposition." And he observes, p. 20, "Men when converted, do not look upon it as *probable*, that the word is his word, *as they did before;* but they *have assurance of the truth of it.*"—So elsewhere (*Guide to Christ*, p 26), "They that have not grace, *do not properly believe* the word of God." And in another book (*Safety of Ap.* p. 6), "The Gospel always works effectually where it is *believed and received as the truth of* God." In another book (*Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 159), "Common illumination *does not convince men of the truth of the gospel.*" In his discourse on the *Virtue of Christ's Blood*, p. 27, speaking of such as have no interest in the blood of Christ, he says, "They are *strangers* to the divine authority of the word of God." Again (*Ibid.* p. 16), "*Before* [i. e. before saving faith], they were *at a loss* whether the word was the word of God." To the like purpose are many other passages in his writings. See *Nat. of Sav. Conv.* p. 72, *Safety of Ap.* p. 6 7, 99, 107, 186, 187, 229, *Benef. of the Gosp.* p. 89.

So that here, if it be true, that some unconverted men have a divine warrant to come to the Lord's supper; and if the thing which is the foundation of this argument, be also true, viz., that in order to men's warrantably coming to the Lord's supper, they must not only *think*, but *know* they have a right; then it must be true likewise, that they not only *think*, but *know*, that the Scripture, wherein this warrant is supposed to be delivered, is the word of God. And then we have the following propositions to make hang together: that unconverted men are *ignorant of the Scriptures being the word of God, are uncertain of it, have no assurance of it, are not convinced of it, do not properly believe it, are at a loss whether it be the word of God or not;* and yet *they not only think, but* know, *that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that the gospel*, which is the charter of all Christian privileges, *is divine;* they have a *knowledge* of it which is *above all probable hope or thought*, and attended with evidence *above a thousand probabilities.*

And now let it be considered, whether this agrees better with Mr. Williams's own doctrine, concerning men's knowing the truth and divine authority of the gospel, in what has been before cited from his sermons on *Christ a King and Witness.* Where he expressly says, "That man, since the fall, is ignorant of divine truth, and full of prejudices against it; has a view of the truth contained in the Bible, as a doubtful, uncertain thing; receives it as what is probably true; sees it as a probable scheme, and something likely to answer the end proposed: but that *after conversion* it appears divinely true and real." See p. 114, 115, and 144. *Then* unconverted men only looked on the truth of the word of God, as *probable, something likely*, yet as a *doubtful, uncertain thing;* but *now* they *not only think*, but *know it to be true.*

No distinction about the different kinds of knowledge, or the various ways of knowing, will ever help these absurdities, or reconcile such inconsistencies. If there be any such sort of *knowing*, as is contradistinguished to probable *thinking*, and to such opinion as is built on *a thousand probabilities*, which is yet consistent with being *ignorant, not believing, being uncertain, not assured, not convinced, only looking on a thing probable, looking on it doubtful and uncertain*, it must certainly be a new and very strange sort of knowledge.

But this argument, that is so clear and invincible, must have such supports as these, or must quite sink to the earth. It is indeed a remarkable kind of argument. It is not only as much against the scheme it is brought to support, as against that which it would confute; but abundantly more so For if it were the case in truth, that none might come to the Lord's supper, but they that *know* they have a right, yet it would be no direct and proper proof, that *unconverted* men might come. It would indeed prove, that many *godly* men might *not* come: which, it is true, would bring some difficulty on the scheme *opposed*

yet it would be no proof against it. But it is direct and perfect demonstration against the scheme it would *support:* it demonstrates according to the Scripture, and according to the doctrine of those that urge the argument, that not one unconverted man in the world may lawfully come to the Lord's supper; as no one of them certainly *knows* the gospel to be divine, and so no one knows the charter to be authentic, in which alone the right of any to Christian privileges is conveyed; hence no one unsanctified man is *sure* of his right; and therefore (as they draw the consequence) no one unsanctified man may come to the Lord's supper. And so it follows, that the more strongly Mr. Williams stands to this argument, the more peremptory and confident his expressions are concerning it, the more violently and effectually does he supplant himself.

And this position, *that a man must not take any privilege, till he not only thinks, but knows he has a right,* is not only unreasonable, as used by Mr. Williams against me, when indeed it is ten times as much against himself; but it is unreasonable in itself, as it is an argument, which if allowed and pursued, will prove that a man may do nothing at all, never move hand or foot, for his own advantage, unless he first, not only *thinks*, but *knows*, it is his duty. Mr. Williams himself owns, p. 116, that all the duties, which God requires of us in his instituted worship, are *privileges*, as well as the Lord's supper: and so is every other duty, which we are to do for our own benefit. But all human actions are, upon the whole, either *good* or *evil:* every thing that we do as rational creatures, is either a duty, or a sin; and the neglect of every thing that is our duty, is forbidden. So that we must never so much as take a step, or move a finger, upon only a probable judgment and hope; but must first *know* it to be our duty, before we do it: nay, we must neither move, nor voluntarily forbear to move, without a *certainty* of our duty in the case, one way or other!

As to its being *alike difficult* for men to know or be assured of their moral sincerity, as of their real sanctification, I shall speak to that under the next head; whereby it will appear again, another way, that this argument is vastly more against Mr. Williams's scheme, than mine.

SECTION XVI.

A consideration of Mr. W.'s defence of the 10th Objection, against the doctrine of the unlawfulness of unsanctified men's coming to the Lord's Supper, that it tends to the great perplexity and torment of many godly men in their attendance on this ordinance.

My *first* reply to this objection was, that it is for want of like tenderness of conscience, that the other doctrine which insists on *moral sincerity*, does not naturally bring such as are received on those principles, into as great *perplexities.*—Mr. Williams in his animadversion upon it says, "This is an assertion which I take to be contrary to common sense, and the experience of mankind; and the allowing of it to be true, must overthrow the law of nature, and cast infinite reproach upon the author of it."

These are strong expressions; but let us bring the matter to the test of reason. The necessary qualification, on Mr. Williams's principles, is moral sincerity, and a *certain degree* of moral sincerity. For there is scarcely any man, that lives under the light of the gospel, and is not an atheist or deist, but what has *some degree* of moral sincerity, in some things pertaining to Christianity and his duty; some degree of common faith, some degree of conviction of the need of Christ, some desire of him, and moral willingness, though from selfish considerations, to be good; and some purpose to endeavor a conformity to the covenant of grace and to seek salvation on the terms of it. But how shall a man know what is a *sufficient degree* of these things? Mr. W. has determined the matter thus

that his belief of the doctrine of the gospel, and moral willingness to be conformed to the covenant of grace, must be *with his* WHOLE *heart*, p. 49, 5, 36 : and that his conviction of his undone state without Christ must be *deep ;* and his desire of Christ and his benefits *fervent*, and his purpose *earnest*, p. 75, 11, so as to induce him to enter into covenant *with* ALL *the earnestness he can*, and engage him to use endeavors *with* ALL *the strength and power that he has*, p. 83, 32, 36.

Now how exceedingly difficult must it be for unsanctified men to determine, with any assurance, whether they have moral sincerity to *such a degree!* How difficult for them to know, whether their convictions are thus *deep!* Every one that is used to deal with souls under conviction, knows, that when they are indeed under deep convictions, they are especially apt to complain of the hardness of their hearts, and to think their convictions are *not* deep. How difficult to determine, with any assurance, whether their assent rises so high, that they can truly be said to *believe with all their hearts!* Whether their moral willingness to be conformed to the covenant of grace, be *with their whole heart!* And whether they are really engaged *with all the solicitude they can*, and are willing to do *all that they can!* These things, I am pretty sure, are of vastly more difficult determination, than whether a man has any true holiness, or not. For in the former case, the determination is concerning the degree of things, that are capable of an infinite variety of degrees; some of which are nearer to, and others are farther from, the lowest *sufficient* degree: and consequently some of the degrees that are not sufficient, may yet be very near; which renders the matter of very difficult determination; unspeakably more so, than when what is to be distinguished, is the *nature* of things, which in *all degrees* is widely diverse, and even contrary to that which it is to be distinguished from : as is the case between saving and common grace ; which Mr. Williams himself acknowledges.* It is more easy to distinguish light from darkness, though there may be innumerable degrees of light, than to determine the precise *degree* of light : and so it is more easy to determine, whether a man be alive, or dead, than whether there be exactly such a degree of vigor and liveliness.

This *moral sincerity* which Mr. Williams insists on, is a most indeterminate, uncertain thing; a phrase without any certain, precise meaning; and must forever remain so. It being not determined *how much* men must be morally sincere; *how much* they must believe with a moral sincerity; whether the deeply awakened and convinced sinner must believe, that God is absolutely sovereign *with respect to his salvation*, and that Christ is perfectly sufficient to *save him in particular ;* and to what *degree* of moral assent and consent, he must believe and embrace these things, and comply with the terms of the covenant of grace; whether he must be willing to obey all God's commands, the most difficult, as well as the most easy, and this in all circumstances, even the most difficult that can arise in providence; or whether only in some circumstances; and what, and how many. The Scripture gives us many infallible rules, by which to distinguish saving grace, and common : but I know of no rules given in the Bible, by which men may certainly determine this *precise degree* of moral sincerity. So that if *grace* is not the thing which gives a right to sacraments in the sight of God, we have no certain rule in the Bible, commensurate to the understanding of mankind, by which to determine when we have a right, and when not Now let the impartial reader judge, which scheme lays the greatest foundation for perplexity to communicants, of tender consciences, concerning their qualifications for the Lord's supper; and whether this argument drawn from such a

* See his sermon on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 84, where he says, "Notwithstanding the visible likeness of nominal and real Christians, there is a wide difference, as there is between the subjects of Christ, and the slaves of the devil."

supposed tendency to such perplexity (if there by any force in it), is not vastly more against Mr. Williams's scheme, than mine.

And, here by the way, let it be noted, that by these things it is again demonstrated, that the *ninth objection*, the great argument considered in the preceding section, concerning the necessity of a *known right*, in order to a lawful partaking, is exceedingly more against Mr. Williams's principles, than mine; inasmuch as, on his principles, it is so much more difficult for men to know whether they have a right, or have the prescribed qualification, or not.

I answered this argument in the *second* place, by alleging that this doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to a right to the Lord's supper, is not properly the *cause* of the perplexities of doubting saints, in their attendance on this ordinance; though it may be the occasion: but that their own negligence and sin is the true cause; and that this doctrine is no more the cause of these perplexities, than the doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to salvation, is the cause of the perplexity of doubting saints when they come to *die*. Upon which Mr. Williams says, "There is no shadow of resemblance of these cases, because death is no ordinance," &c. But if death is no ordinance, yet it is the required duty of the saints to *yield themselves to the Lord*, and *resign* to the will of God, in their death. And in this respect the cases are exactly parallel, that *perplexities* are just so much the *consequence* of the respective doctrines, in one case as in the other; that is, the perplexities of a doubting saint on a *death-bed*, the difficulty and trouble he meets with in resigning himself to the will of God in dying, is just in the same manner the consequence of the doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to eternal salvation, as the perplexities of a doubting saint at the *Lord's table* are the consequence of the doctrine of the necessity of saving grace in order to a right to the Lord's supper. And this is sufficient for my purpose.

Mr. Williams himself says, in his answer to Mr. Croswell, p. 122, "Although there are comparatively few that obtain assurance; yet it is through their own sloth and negligence, that they do not. We fully agree with Mr. Perkins that a man in this life may ordinarily be infallibly certain of his salvation." So Mr. Stoddard, in his sermon on *One good Sign*, says, "There is no necessity that the people of God should lie under darkness and temptation; they may obtain assurance." Now, if this be the case, then certainly there is no justice in laying the temptation and uneasiness, which is the effect of sloth and negligence, to the doctrine I maintain, in those that embrace it. It is a wise dispensation of God, that he has so ordered things, that comfort in ordinances, and in all duties, and under all providences, should be to be obtained in a way of diligence; and that slothfulness should be the way to perplexity and uneasiness, and should be a way *hedged up with thorns*, agreeable to Prov. xv. 19. That it is so ordered, is for the good of the saints, as it tends to turn them out of this thorny path, into the way of diligence. And so this doctrine, as it has this tendency, has a tendency in the end to that solid peace and comfort, which is the happy fruit of their holy diligence. And that, and not the saints' perplexity, is properly the effect of this doctrine.

SECTION XVII.

Containing some further Observations on what is said by Mr. Williams in support of the 13th Objection, concerning God's commanding all the Members of the visible Church, that are not ignorant nor scandalous, to attend all external Covenant Duties.

It has been already demonstrated (sect. 8th of this third part) that in this argument the question is begged, notwithstanding what Mr. Williams has said

to the contrary; which sufficiently overthrows the whole argument. Nevertheless, that I may pass by nothing, which such as are on Mr. Williams's side may be likely to think material; I will here make some further observations on this objection, as represented and supported by Mr. Williams.

The chief thing that has the plausible appearance of argument in what Mr. Stoddard and Mr. Williams say on this head, is this; that "for God to require all who are in covenant to come to the Lord's supper, and yet to forbid them to come unconverted, is to suppose, that he both commands them, and forbids them at the same time." And this is thought to be the more manifest, inasmuch as *conversion is not in men's power.* Though it is not denied, but that God justly requires men to be converted, or to be truly holy. See p. 129, 130.

To this I would say,

(1.) If when they speak of commanding and forbidding at the same time, they mean God's commanding and forbidding *the same thing*, at the same time, no such consequence follows from my principles. For *that* thing, and that only, which I suppose God requires of any, is to come to the Lord's supper with a sanctified heart; and that this God requires at *all times*, and never forbids at *any time*; and that to come without this qualification, is what he *always* forbids, and *requires at no time.* So that *what* he requires, at the same time he forbids something, is not the same thing that he forbids; but a very different and contrary one: and it is no absurdity, to suppose, that God requires one thing, and forbids a contrary thing at the same time.

To illustrate this by an example: it was the duty of the Jews at Jerusalem, openly to *confess* CHRIST, to own him as the *Messiah*, at that hour when he was led away to be crucified, and openly to testify their adoring respect to him on that extraordinary occasion. But yet they did not believe him to be the *Messiah*, and could not believe it (many of them at least), since they looked on his present abject circumstances as a demonstration, that he was not the *Messiah.* It was beyond their power, at least at once, in that instant to give their assent, with all their hearts, to such a supposition. Nor was it in their power, to exercise an adoring respect to him: for besides their strong prejudices, most of them were judicially hardened, and given up to a spirit of unbelief and obstinate rejection of him; as appears by that account, John xii. 39, 40, "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes," &c. See also Luke xix. 41, 42, and Matt. xiii. 14, 15. And yet it would have been unlawful for them to have made a lying profession; to profess, that they believed him to be the *Messiah*, and that they received and loved him as such, when at the same time they hated him, and did not believe he was the *Messiah.* But here is no requiring and forbidding the same thing at the same time: for the only thing required of them was, to have faith and love, and to testify it; which was not at all forbidden.

(2.) None of the difficulties which Mr. Stoddard or Mr. Williams objects, either God's supposed requiring impossibilities, or his requiring and forbidding at the same time, do follow, any more on *my* principles, than on Mr. Williams's Mr. Williams maintains, that God calls men *this moment* to enter into covenant with him, and commands them to do it, p. 28 One thing implied in this, according to his own frequent explanation of visibly entering into covenant, is professing a belief of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Now therefore we will suppose a man to be a candidate for baptism, who has been brought up in Arianism; and is strongly persuaded that the doctrine of the TRINITY is not true: yet he is this moment required to profess that doctrine; but has no ability in a moment to believe the doctrine, because he does not at present see the

evidence of it. For as Mr. Williams himself says, in sermon on *Christ a King and Witness*, p. 91, 92, "The understanding cannot be brought to yield its assent to any truth, which it does not see the truth or apprehend the evidence of. If you would hire him with cart-loads, or ship-loads of gold and silver; if you would imprison him, whip him, burn him; you cannot make him believe a thing to be true, which he apprehends to be incredible, or which he sees no sufficient reason to believe." Now, therefore, what shall the man do, on Mr. Williams's principles? He is commanded to profess the doctrine of the Trinity, which must be professed in order to be lawfully baptized in the name of the Trinity; and on Mr. Williams's principles, he is commanded to do it *this moment:* yet also on his principles, if the man professes it, and is not morally sincere, or knows he does not believe it, he is guilty of *horrible falsehood and prevarication;* which God doubtless forbids. Therefore here is certainly as much of an appearance of commanding and forbidding the same thing at the same time, as in the other case.

Every husbandman in Israel, that lived even in Christ's time, was required to offer a basket of the first fruits; and was commanded, when he offered it, solemnly to make that profession, concerning the principal facts relating to the redemption out of Egypt, which is prescribed in Deut. xxvi. 5—10, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father," &c. Now supposing there had been an Israelite, who did not believe the truth of all these facts, which came to pass so many ages before (as there are now many in Christendom, who do not believe the facts concerning Jesus Christ), and continued in his unbelief, until the very moment of his offering; God peremptorily requires him to make this profession; yet none will say, that he may lawfully profess these things, at the same time when he does not believe them to be true. However, here is no commanding and forbidding the same thing at the same time: because, though God required the Jews to make this profession, yet the thing required was to *believe it* and *profess it*. Though some might not believe it, nor be able for the present to believe it; yet this inability arose from depravity and wickedness of heart, which did not at all excuse their unbelief, for *one moment*.* Mr. Williams himself owns, p. 129, that God may require those things which are out of men's natural power.

Now this may be laid down as a truth, of easy and plain evidence: *if God may require what wicked men, while such, are unable to perform, then he may also require those things which are connected with it, and which, if the other be done, they would be able to do, and might do, and without which they may not do it.* So if God may require an unsanctified man to love him, then he may require him to testify and profess his love, as I suppose Christians do in the act of partaking of the Lord's supper; and yet it may not be lawful for him to testify and profess love, when he has it not.

* This instance may show us, that God's requiring all Israel to enter into covenant with him, and seal their covenant in the passover, will not prove, that it was lawful for any to avouch the Lord to be their God, and promise and swear they would perform universal and persevering obedience, when at the same moment they had no love to God, and even then, while speaking the words, continued in a habitual, wilful disobedience to God's commands, and were willing slaves to the devil. Nor will it follow, from these commands given to the Israelites, concerning their covenanting with God, and sealing their covenant, that God ever did, since the foundation of the world, appoint or command any other covenanting with him, than as giving up themselves wholly and without reserve, both soul and body, both heart and life; or that ever he appointed or commanded any covenanting, wherein men give a part, and keep back a part, give him the outside and keep back the noblest and best part, the heart, will and affections, for sin and Satan, or that there is any such covenant of God in being; or that such covenanting has not always been as much without foundation in any institution of God, as any of the spurious sacraments of the church of Rome: or that it has not always been strictly forbidden of God: or that it is not absolutely and in itself sinful and unlawful, as truly as the act of Ananias and Sapphira.

A HISTORY

OF THE

WORK OF REDEMPTION.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE EDINBURGH EDITION.

THEY who have a relish for the study of the Scriptures, and have access to peruse the following sheets, will, I am persuaded, deem themselves much indebted to the Reverend Mr. EDWARDS of New Haven for consenting to publish them. Though the acute philosopher and deep divine appears in them, yet they are in the general better calculated for the instruction and improvement of ordinary Christians, than those of President EDWARDS's writings, where the abstruse nature of the subject, or the subtle objections of opposers of the truth, led him to more abstract and metaphysical reasonings. The manuscript being intrusted to my care, I have not presumed to make any change in the sentiments or composition. I have, however, taken the liberty to reduce it from the form of sermons, which it originally bore, to that of a continued treatise; and I have so altered and diversified the marks of the several divisions and subdivisions, that each class of heads might be easily distinguished.

JOHN ERSKINE.

EDINBURGH, *April*, 29, 1774.

PREFACE.

It has long been desired by the friends of Mr. Edwards that a number of his manuscripts should be published; but the disadvantage under which all posthumous publications must necessarily appear, and the difficulty of getting any considerable work printed in this infant country hitherto, have proved sufficient obstacles to the execution of such a proposal. The first of these obstacles made me doubt, for a considerable time after these manuscripts came into my hands, whether I could, consistently with that regard which I owe to the honor of so worthy a parent, suffer any of them to appear in the world. However, being diffident of my own sentiments, and doubtful whether I were not over-jealous in this matter, I determined to submit to the opinion of gentlemen, who are friends both to the character of Mr. Edwards and to the cause of truth. The consequence was, that they gave their advice for publishing them.

The other obstacle was removed by a gentleman in the church of Scotland, who was formerly a correspondent of Mr. Edwards. He engaged a bookseller to undertake the work, and also signified his desire, that these following discourses in particular might be made public.

Mr. Edwards had planned a body of divinity, in a new method, and in the form of a history; in which he was first to show, how the most remarkable events, in all ages from the fall to the present times, recorded in sacred and profane history, were adapted to promote the work of redemption; and then to trace, by the light of Scripture prophecy, how the same work should be yet further carried on even to the end of the world. His heart was so much set on executing this plan, that he was considerably averse to accept the presidentship of Princeton college, lest the duties of that office should put it out of his power.

The outlines of that work are now offered to the public, as contained in a series of sermons preached at Northampton in 1739,* without any view to publication. On that account, the reader cannot reasonably expect all that from them, which he might justly have expected, had they been written with such a view, and prepared by the author's own hand for the press.

As to elegance of composition, which is now esteemed so essential to all publications, it is well known, that the author did not make that his chief study. However his other writings, though destitute of the ornaments of fine language, have it seems that solid merit, which has procured both to themselves and to him a considerable reputation in the world, and with many, a high esteem. It is hoped that the reader will find in these discourses many traces of plain good sense, sound reasoning, and thorough knowledge of the sacred oracles, and real unfeigned piety; and that, as the plan is new, and many of the sentiments uncommon, they may afford entertainment and improvement to the ingenious, the inquisitive, and the pious reader; may confirm their faith in God's government of the world, in our holy Christian religion in general, and in many of its peculiar doctrines; may assist in studying with greater pleasure and advantage the historical and prophetical books of Scripture; and may excite to a conversation becoming the gospel.

That this volume may produce these happy effects in all who shall peruse it, is the hearty desire and prayer of

The reader's most humble servant,

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

New Haven, Feb. 25, 1773.

* This is necessary to be remembered by the reader, in order to understand some chronological observations in the following work.

WORK OF REDEMPTION.

ISAIAH li. 8.—For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

THE design of this chapter is to comfort the church under her sufferings, and the persecutions of her enemies; and the argument of consolation insisted on, is, the constancy and perpetuity of God's mercy and faithfulness towards her, which shall be manifest in continuing to work salvation for her, protecting her against all assaults of her enemies, and carrying her safely through all the changes of the world, and finally crowning her with victory and deliverance

In the text, this happiness of the church of God is set forth by comparing it with the contrary fate of her enemies that oppress her. And therein we may observe,

1. How short-lived the power and prosperity of the church's enemies is *The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool;* i. e., however great their prosperity is, and however great their present glory, they shall by degrees consume and vanish away by a secret curse of God, till they come to nothing; and all their power and glory, and so their persecutions, eternally cease, and they be finally and irrecoverably ruined: as the finest and most glorious apparel will in time wear away, and be consumed by moths and rottenness. We learn who those are that shall thus consume away, by the foregoing verse, viz., those that are the enemies of God's people: *Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.*

2. The contrary happy lot and portion of God's church, expressed in these words, *My righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation.* Who are meant as those that shall have the benefit of this, we also learn by the preceding verse, viz., they *that know righteousness,* and *the people in whose heart is God's law;* or, in one word, the church of God. And concerning this happiness of theirs here spoken of, we may observe two things, viz., 1. Wherein it consists. 2. Its continuance.

(1.) Wherein it consists, viz., in God's righteousness and salvation toward them. By God's righteousness here, is meant his faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant promises to his church, or his faithfulness towards his church and people in bestowing the benefits of the covenant of grace upon them; which benefits, though they are bestowed of free and sovereign grace, as being altogether undeserved; yet as God has been pleased, by the promises of the covenant of grace, to bind himself to bestow them, so they are bestowed in the exercise of God's righteousness or justice. And therefore the apostle says, Heb. vi. 10 *God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love.* And so 1 John i. 9, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* So the word *righteousness* is very often used in Scripture for God's covenant faithfulness; so it is used in Nehem. ix

8, *Thou hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous.* So we are often to understand righteousness and covenant mercy for the same thing; as Psal. xxiv. 5, *He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.* Psal. xxxvi. 10, *Continue thy loving-kindness to them that know thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.* And Psal. li. 14, *Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.* Dan. ix. 16, *O Lord, according to thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away* And so in innumerable other places.

The other word here used is *salvation.* Of these two, God's righteousness and his salvation, the one is the cause, of which the other is the effect. God's righteousness, or covenant mercy, is the root, of which his salvation is the fruit. Both of them relate to the covenant of grace. The one is God's covenant mercy and faithfulness, the other intends that work of God by which this covenant mercy is accomplished in the fruits of it. For salvation is the sum of all those works of God by which the benefits that are by the covenant of grace are procured and bestowed.

(2.) We may observe its continuance, signified here by two expressions; *forever*, and *from generation to generation.* The latter seems to be explanatory of the former. The phrase *forever*, is variously used in Scripture. Sometimes thereby is meant as long as a man lives. So it is said, the servant that has his ear bored through with an awl to the door of his master, should be his *forever.* Sometimes thereby is meant during the continuance of the Jewish state So of many of the ceremonial and Levitical laws, it is said that they should be statutes *forever.* Sometimes it means as long as the world shall stand, or to the end of the generations of men. So it is said, Eccles. i. 4, "One generation passeth away, and another cometh; but the earth abideth *forever.*" Sometimes thereby is meant to all eternity. So it is said, "God is blessed *forever,*" Rom. i. 25. And so it is said, John vi. 51, "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live *forever.*" —And which of these senses is here to be understood, the next words determine, viz., to the end of the world, or to the end of the generations of men. It is said in the next words, "and my salvation *from generation to generation.*" Indeed the fruits of God's salvation shall remain after the end of the world, as appears by the 6th verse: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner, *but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.*" But the work of salvation itself toward the church chall continue to be wrought till then: till the end of the world God will go on to accomplish deliverance and salvation for the church, from all her enemies; for that is what the prophet is here speaking of; till the end of the world; till her enemies cease to be, as to any power to molest the church. And this expression, *from generation to generation*, may determine us as to the time which God continues to carry on the work of salvation for his church, both with respect to the beginning and end. It is from generation to generation, i. e., throughout all generations; beginning with the generations of men on the earth, and not ending till these generations end, at the end of the world.—And therefore we deduce from these words this

DOCTRINE.

The work of Redemption is a work that God carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

The generations of mankind on the earth did not begin till after the fall The beginning of the posterity of our first parents was after the fall; for all their posterity, by ordinary generation, are partakers of the fall, and of the corruption of nature that followed from it; and these generations, by which the human race is propagated, shall continue to the end of the world: so these two are the limits of the generations of men on the earth; the fall of man, the beginning; and the end of the world, or the day of judgment, the end. The same are the limits of the work of redemption as to those progressive works of God, by which that redemption is brought about and accomplished, though not as to the fruits of it; for they, as was said before, shall be to all eternity.

The work of redemption and the work of salvation are the same thing. What is sometimes in Scripture called God's saving his people, is in other places called his redeeming them. So Christ is called both the Saviour and the Redeemer of his people.

Before entering on the proposed History of the Work of Redemption, I would,

1. Explain the terms made use of in the doctrine; and,

2. Show what those things are that are designed to be accomplished by this great work of God.

First, I would show in what sense the terms of the doctrine are used. And, 1, I would show how I would be understood when I use the word *redemption*; and, 2, how I would be understood when I say, this work is a work of God, carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

I. I would show how I would be understood when I use the word *redemption*. And here it may be observed, that the work of redemption is sometimes understood in a more limited sense, for the purchase of salvation; for so the word strictly signifies, a purchase of deliverance; and if we take the word in this restrained sense, the work of redemption was not so long in doing. But it was begun and finished with Christ's humiliation. It was all wrought while Christ was upon earth. It was begun with Christ's incarnation, and carried on through Christ's life, and finished with his death, or the time of his remaining under the power of death, which ended in his resurrection. And so we say, that the day of Christ's resurrection is the day when Christ finished the work of redemption, i. e., then the purchase was finished, and the work itself, and all that appertained to it, was *virtually* done and finished, but not *actually*.

But then sometimes the work of redemption is taken more largely, including all that God works or accomplishes tending to this end; not only the purchasing of redemption, but also all God's works that were properly preparatory to the purchase, or as applying the purchase and accomplishing the success of it; so that the whole dispensation, as it includes the preparation and the purchase, and the application and success of Christ's redemption, is here called the work of *redemption*. All that Christ does in this great affair as mediator, in any of his offices, either of prophet, priest, or king; either when he was in this world, in his human nature, or before, or since; and not only what Christ the mediator has done, but also what the Father, or the Holy Ghost, have done, as united or confederated in this design of redeeming sinful men; or, in one word, all that is wrought in execution of the eternal covenant of redemption; this is what I call the work of redemption in the doctrine; for it is all but one work, one design. The various dispensations or works that belong to it, are but the several parts of one scheme. It is but one design that is formed, to which all the offices of Christ do directly tend, and in which all the persons of the Trinity do conspire, and all the various dispensations that belong to it are

united; and the several wheels are one machine, to answer one end, and produce one effect.

II. When I say, this work is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world; in order to the full understanding of my meaning in it, I would desire two or three things to be observed.

1. That it is not meant, that nothing was done in order to it, before the fall of man. There were many things done in order to this work of redemption before that. Some things were done before the world was created, yea from all eternity. The persons of the Trinity were as it were confederated in a design and a covenant of redemption; in which covenant the Father had appointed the Son, and the Son had undertaken the work; and all things to be accomplished in the work were stipulated and agreed. And besides these, there were things done at the creation of the world, in order to that work, before man fell; for the world itself seems to have been created in order to it. The work of creation was in order to God's works of providence. So that if it be inquired, which of these kinds of works is the greatest, the works of creation or the works of providence? I answer, the works of providence; because God's works of providence are the end of his works of creation, as the building a house, or the forming an engine or machine, is for its use. But God's main work of providence is this great work of God that the doctrine speaks of, as may more fully appear hereafter.

The creation of heaven was in order to the work of redemption. It was to be a habitation for the redeemed. Matt. xxv. 34, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Even the angels were created to be employed in this work. And therefore the apostle calls them, "*ministering spirits*, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Heb. i. 14. As to this lower world, it was doubtless created to be a stage upon which this great and wonderful work of redemption should be transacted. And therefore, as might be shown, in many respects, this lower world is wisely fitted, in the formation, for such a state of man as he is in since the fall, under a possibility of redemption; so that when it is said that the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man, to the end of the world, it is not meant that all that ever was done in order to redemption has been done since the fall. Nor,

2. Is it meant that there will be no remaining fruits of this work after the end of the world. The greatest fruits of all will be after that. That glory and blessedness that will be the sum of all the fruits, will remain to all the saints after that. The work of redemption is not an eternal work, i. e., it is not a work always a doing and never accomplished. But the fruits of this work are eternal fruits. The work has an issue. But in the issue the end will be obtained; which end will never have an end. As those things that were in order to this work before the beginning of the world, as God's electing love, and the covenant of redemption, never had a beginning; so the fruits of this work, that shall be after the end of the world, never will have an end. And therefore,

3. When it is said in the doctrine, that this is a work that God is carrying on from the fall of man to the end of the world, what I mean is, that those things that belong to this work itself, and are parts of this scheme, are all this while accomplishing. There are things that are in order to it that are before the beginning of it, and fruits of it that are after it is finished. But the work itself is so long a doing, even from the fall of man to the end of the world, it

is all this while a carrying on. It was begun immediately upon the fall, and will continue to the end of the world, and then will be finished. The various dispensations of God that are in this space, do belong to the same work, and to the same design, and have all one issue; and therefore are all to be reckoned but as several parts of one work, as it were several successive motions of one machine, to bring about in the conclusion one great event.

And here also we must distinguish between the parts of redemption itself, and the parts of the work by which that redemption is wrought out. There is a difference between the parts of the benefits procured and bestowed, and the parts of the work of God by which those benefits were procured and bestowed. As, for example, there is a difference between the parts of the benefit that the children of Israel received, consisting in their redemption out of Egypt, and the parts of that work of God by which this was wrought. The redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, considered as the benefit which they enjoyed, consisted of two parts, viz., their deliverance from their former Egyptian bondage and misery, and their being brought into a more happy state, as the servants of God, and heirs of Canaan. But there are many more things which are parts of that work of God which is called his work of redemption of Israel out of Egypt. To this belong his calling of Moses, his sending him to Pharaoh, and all the signs and wonders he wrought in Egypt, and his bringing such terrible judgments on the Egyptians, and many other things.

It is this work by which God effects redemption that we are speaking of. This work is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world; and it is so in two respects.

(1.) With respect to the effect wrought on the souls of the redeemed; which is common to all ages from the fall of man to the end of the world. This effect that I here speak of, is the application of redemption with respect to the souls of particular persons, in converting, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying of them. By these things the souls of particular persons are actually redeemed, and do receive the benefit of the work of redemption in its effect in their souls. And in this sense the work of redemption is carried on in all ages of the world, from the fall of man to the end of the world. The work of God in converting souls, opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, raising dead souls to life, and rescuing the miserable captivated souls out of the hands of Satan, was begun soon after the fall of man, has been carried on in the world ever since to this day, and will be to the end of the world. God has always, ever since the first erecting of the church of the redeemed after the fall, had such a church in the world. Though oftentimes it has been reduced to a very narrow compass, and to low circumstances; yet it has never wholly failed.

And as God carries on the work of converting the souls of fallen men through all these ages, so he goes on to justify them, to blot out all their sins, and to accept them as righteous in his sight, through the righteousness of Christ, and adopt and receive them from being the children of Satan, to be his own children; so also he goes on to sanctify, or to carry on the work of his grace, which he has begun in them, and to comfort them with the consolations of his Spirit, and to glorify them, to bestow upon them, when their bodies die, that eternal glory which is the fruit of the purchase of Christ. What is said, Rom. viii. 30, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified:" I say this is applicable to all ages, from the fall, to the end of the world.

The way that the work of redemption, with respect to these effects of it on the souls of the redeemed, is carried on from the fall to the end of the world, is

by repeating and continually working the same work over again, though in different persons, from age to age. But,

(2.) The work of redemption with respect to the grand design in general, as it respects the universal subject and end, is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world in a different manner, not merely by repeating or renewing the same effect in the different subjects of it, but by many successive works and dispensations of God, all tending to one great end and effect, all united as the several parts of a scheme, and all together making up one great work. Like a house or temple that is building; first the workmen are sent forth, then the materials are gathered, then the ground fitted, then the foundation is laid, then the superstructure is erected, one part after another, till at length the top stone is laid, and all is finished Now the work of redemption in that large sense that has been explained, may be compared to such a building, that is carrying on from the fall of man to the end of the world. God went about it immediately after the fall of man. Some things were done towards it immediately, as may be shown hereafter; and so God has proceeded, as it were, getting materials and building, ever since; and so will proceed to the end of the world; and then the time will come when the top stone shall be brought forth, and all will appear complete and consummate. The glorious structure will then stand forth in its proper perfection.

This work is carried on in the former respect that has been mentioned, viz., as to the effect on the souls of particular persons that are redeemed, by its being an effect that is common to all ages. The work is carried on in this latter respect, viz., as it respects the church of God, and the grand design in general, it is carried on, not only by that which is common to all ages, but by successive works wrought in different ages, all parts of one whole, or one great scheme, whereby one work is brought about by various steps, one step in one age, and another in another. It is this carrying on of the work of redemption that I shall chiefly insist upon, though not excluding the former; for one necessarily supposes the other.

Having thus explained what I mean by the terms of the doctrine; that you may the more clearly see how the great design and work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world; I say, in order to this,

I now proceed, in the second place, to show what is the design of this great work, or what things are designed to be done by it. In order to see how a design is carried on, we must first know what the design is. To know how a workman proceeds, and to understand the various steps he takes, in order to accomplish a piece of work, we need to be informed what he is about, or what the thing is that he intends to accomplish; otherwise we may stand by, and see him do one thing after another, and be quite puzzled and in the dark, seeing nothing of his scheme, and understanding nothing of what he means by it. If an architect, with a great number of hands, were a building some great palace, and one that was a stranger to such things should stand by, and see some men digging in the earth, others bringing timber, others hewing stones, and the like, he might see that there was a great deal done; but if he knew not the design, it would all appear to him confusion. And therefore, that the great works and dispensations of God that belong to this great affair of redemption may not appear like confusion to you, I would set before you briefly the main things designed to be accomplished in this great work, to accomplish which God began to work presently after the fall of man, and will continue working to the end of the world, when the whole work will appear completely finished. And the main things designed to be done by it are these that follow

I. It is to put all God's enemies under his feet, and that the goodness of God should finally appear triumphing over all evil. Soon after the world was created, evil entered into the world in the fall of the angels and man. Presently after God had made rational creatures, there were enemies who rose up against him from among them; and in the fall of man evil entered into this lower world, and God's enemies rose up against him here. Satan rose up against God, endeavoring to frustrate his design in the creation of this lower world, to destroy his workmanship here, and to wrest the government of this lower world out of his hands, and usurp the throne himself, and set up himself as god of this world instead of the God that made it. And to these ends he introduced sin into the world; and having made man God's enemy, he brought guilt on man, and brought death and the most extreme and dreadful misery into the world.

Now one great design of God in the affair of redemption was, to reduce and subdue those enemies of God, till they should all be put under God's feet: 1 Cor. xv. 25, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.' Things were originally so planned and designed, that he might disappoint and confound, and triumph over Satan, and that he might be bruised under Christ's feet, Gen. iii. 15. The promise was given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It was a part of God's original design in this work, to destroy the works of the devil, and confound him in all his purposes: 1 John iii. 8, "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." It was a part of his design, to triumph over sin, and over the corruptions of men, and to root them out of the hearts of his people, by conforming them to himself. He designed also, that his grace should triumph over man's guilt, and that infinite demerit that there is in sin. Again, it was a part of his design, to triumph over death; and however this is the last enemy that shall be destroyed, yet that shall finally be vanquished and destroyed.

God thus appears gloriously above all evil; and triumphing over all his enemies, was one great thing that God intended by the work of redemption; and the work by which this was to be done, God immediately went about as soon as man fell; and so goes on till he fully accomplishes it in the end of the world.

II. In doing this God's design was perfectly to restore all the ruins of the fall, so far as concerns the elect part of the world, by his Son; and therefore we read of the *restitution of all things:* Acts iii. 21, "Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of the *restitution of all things;*" and of the *times of refreshing* from the presence of the Lord *Jesus:* Acts iii. 19, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the *times of refreshing* shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Man's soul was ruined by the fall; the image of God was ruined; man's nature was corrupted and destroyed, and man became dead in sin. The design of God was, to restore the soul of man; to restore life to it, and the image of God, in conversion, and to carry on the restoration in sanctification, and to perfect it in glory. Man's body was ruined; by the fall it became subject to death. The design of God was, to restore it from this ruin, and not only to deliver it from death in the resurrection, but to deliver it from mortality itself, in making it like unto Christ's glorious body. The world was ruined, as to man, as effectually as if it had been reduced to *chaos* again; all heaven and earth were overthrown. But the design of God was, to restore all, and as it were to create a new heaven and a new earth: Isaiah lxv 17, "Behold, I create

new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." 2 Pet. iii. 13, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The work by which this was to be done, was begun immediately after the fall, and so is carried on till all is finished at the end, when the whole world, heaven and earth, shall be restored; and there shall be, as it were, new heavens, and a new earth, in a spiritual sense, at the end of the world. Thus it is represented, Rev. xxi. 1: "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."

III. Another great design of God in the work of redemption, was, to gather together in one all things in Christ, in heaven and in earth, i. e., all elect creatures; to bring all elect creatures, in heaven and in earth, to a union one to another in one body, under one head, and to unite all together in one body to God the Father. This was begun soon after the fall, and is carried on through all ages of the world, and finished at the end of the world.

IV. God designed by this work to perfect and complete the glory of all the elect by Christ. It was a design of God to advance the elect to an exceeding pitch of glory, "such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it ever entered into the heart of man." He intended to bring them to perfect excellency and beauty in his image, and in holiness, which is the proper beauty of spiritual beings; and to advance them to a glorious degree of honor, and also to an ineffable pitch of pleasure and joy; and thus to glorify the whole church of elect men in soul and body, and with them to bring the glory of the elect angels to its highest pitch under one head. The work which tends to this, God began immediately after the fall, and carries on through all ages, and will have perfected at the end of the world.

V. In all this God designed to accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an exceeding degree. God had a design of glorifying himself from eternity; to glorify each person in the Godhead. The end must be considered as first in the order of nature, and then the means; and therefore we must conceive, that God having professed this end, had then as it were the means to choose; and the principal means that he pitched upon was this great work of redemption that we are speaking of. It was his design in this work to glorify his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and it was his design, by the Son to glorify the Father: John xiii. 31, 22, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God also shall glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." It was his design that the Son should thus be glorified, and should glorify the Father by what should be accomplished by the Spirit to the glory of the Spirit, that the whole Trinity, conjunctly, and each person singly, might be exceedingly glorified. The work that was the appointed means of this, was begun immediately after the fall, and is carried on till, and finished at, the end of the world, when all this intended glory shall be fully accomplished in all things.

Having thus explained the terms made use of in the doctrine, and shown what the things are which are to be accomplished by this great work of God, I proceed now to the proposed History; that is, to show how what was designed by the work of redemption is accomplished, in the various steps of this work, from the fall of man to the end of the world.

In order to this, I would divide this whole space of time into three periods; the

1st Reaching from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ: the

2d, From Christ's incarnation till his resurrection: or the whole time of Christ's humiliation: the

3d, From thence to the end of the world.

It may be some may be ready to think this a very unequal division: and it is so indeed in some respects. It is so, because the second period is so much the greatest: for although it be so much shorter than either of the other, being but between thirty and forty years, whereas both the other contain thousands; yet in this affair that we are now upon, it is more than both the others. I would therefore proceed to show distinctly how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, through each of these periods in their order: which I would do under three propositions; one concerning each period.

I. That from the fall of man till the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming, and working out redemption, and were forerunners and earnests of it.

II. That the time from Christ's incarnation, till his resurrection, was spent in procuring and purchasing redemption.

III. That the space of time from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, is all taken up in bringing about or accomplishing the great effect or success of that purchase.

In a particular consideration of these three propositions, the great truth taught in the doctrine may perhaps appear in a clear light, and we may see how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

PERIOD I.

FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION.

My first task is, to show how the work of redemption is carried on *from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ*, under the *first proposition*, viz.,

That the space of time from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ was taken up in doing those things that were forerunners and earnests of Christ's coming, and working out redemption, and were preparatory to it.

The great works of God in the world during this whole space of time, were all preparatory to this. There were many great changes and revolutions in the world, and they were all only the turning of the wheels of Providence in order to this, to make way for the coming of Christ, and what he was to do in the world. They all pointed hither, and all issued here. Hither tended especially all God's great works towards his church. The church was under various dispensations of Providence, and in very various circumstances, before Christ came. But all these dispensations were to prepare the way for his coming. God wrought salvation for the souls of men through all that space of time, though the number was very small to what it was afterwards; and all this salvation was, as it were, by way of anticipation. All the souls that were saved before Christ came, were only as it were the earnests of the future harvest.

God wrought many lesser salvations and deliverances for his church and people before Christ came. These salvations were all but so many images and forerunners of the great salvation Christ was to work out when he should come. God revealed himself of old, from time to time, from the fall of man to the coming of Christ. The church during that space of time enjoyed the light of divine revelation, or God's word. They had in a degree the light of the gospel. But all these revelations were only so many forerunners and earnests of the great light that he should bring who came to be the light of the world. That whole space of time was, as it were, the time of night, wherein the church of God was not indeed wholly without light: but it was like the light of the moon and stars that we have in the night; a dim light in comparison of the light of the sun, and mixed with a great deal of darkness. It had no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth, 2 Cor. iii. 10. The church had indeed the light of the sun; but it was only as reflected from the moon and stars. The church all that while was a minor. This the apostle evidently teaches in Gal. iv. 1, 2, 3: "Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

But here, for the greater clearness and distinctness, I would subdivide this period, from the fall of man to the coming of Christ, into six lesser periods, or parts: the

1st, Extending from the fall to the flood: the
2d, From thence to the calling of Abraham: the
3d, From thence to Moses: the
4th, From thence to David: the
5th, From David to the captivity into Babylon: and the
6th, From thence to the incarnation of Christ.

PART I

FROM THE FALL TO THE FLOOD.

This was a period farthest of all distant from Christ's incarnation; yet then this great work was begun to be carried on; then was this glorious building begun, and will not be finished till the end of the world, as I would now show you how. And to this purpose I would observe,

I. As soon as ever man fell, Christ entered on his mediatorial work. Then it was that Christ first took on him the work and office of a mediator. He had undertaken it before the world was made. He stood engaged with the Father to appear as man's mediator, and to take on him that office when there should be occasion, from all eternity. But now the time was come. When man fell, then the occasion came; and then Christ immediately, without further delay, entered on his work, and took on him that office that he had stood engaged to take on him from eternity. As soon as ever man fell, Christ the eternal Son of God clothed himself with the mediatorial character, and therein presented himself before the Father. He immediately stepped in between a holy, infinite, offended Majesty, and offending mankind; and was accepted in his interposition;

and so wrath was prevented from going forth in the full execution of that amazing curse that man had brought on himself.

It is manifest that Christ began to exercise the office of mediator between God and man as soon as ever man fell, because mercy began to be exercised towards man immediately. There was mercy in the forbearance of God, that he did not destroy him, as he did the angels when they fell. But there is no mercy exercised towards fallen man but through a mediator. If God had not in mercy restrained Satan, he would immediately have seized on his prey. Christ began to do the part of an intercessor for man as soon as he fell. There is no mercy exercised towards man but what is obtained through Christ's intercession; so that now Christ was entered on his work that he was to continue in throughout all ages of the world. From that day forward Christ took on him the care of the church of the elect; he took on him the care of fallen man in the exercise of all his offices; he undertook thenceforward to teach mankind in the exercise of his prophetical office; and also to intercede for fallen man in his priestly office; and he took on him, as it were, the care and burden of the government of the church, and of the world of mankind, from this day forward. He from that time took upon him the care of the defence of his elect church from all their enemies. When Satan, the grand enemy, had conquered and overthrown man, the business of resisting and conquering him was committed to Christ. He thenceforward undertook to manage that subtle powerful adversary. He was then appointed the Captain of the Lord's hosts, and the Captain of their salvation, and always acted as such thenceforward; and so he appeared from time to time, and he will continue to act as such to the end of the world. Henceforward this lower world, with all its concerns, was, as it were, devolved upon the Son of God: for when man had sinned, God the Father would have no more to do with man immediately; he would no more have any immediate concern with this world of mankind, that had apostatized from, and rebelled against him. He would henceforward have no concern with man, but only through a mediator, either in teaching men, or in governing or bestowing any benefits on them.

And therefore, when we read in sacred history what God did from time to time towards his church and people, and what he said to them, and how he revealed himself to them, we are to understand it especially of the second person of the Trinity. When we read of God's appearing after the fall, from time to time in some visible form or outward symbol of his presence, we are ordinarily, if not universally, to understand it of the second person of the Trinity; which may be argued from John i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He is therefore called "the image of the invisible God," Col. i. 15; intimating, that though God the Father be invisible, yet Christ is his image or representation, by which he is seen, or by which the Church of God hath often had a representation of him, that is not invisible, and in particular that Christ has after appeared in a human form.

Yea, not only was this lower world devolved on Christ, that he might have the care and government of it, and order it agreeably to his design of redemption, but also in some respect the whole universe. The angels from that time were committed to him, to be subject to him in his mediatorial office, to be ministering spirits to him in this affair; and accordingly were so from this time forward, as is manifest by the Scripture history, wherein we have accounts from time to time of their acting as ministering spirits in the affairs of the Church of Christ.

And therefore we may suppose, that immediately on the fall of man, it was made known in heaven among the angels, that God had a design of redemption with respect to fallen man, and that Christ had now taken upon him the office and work of a mediator between God and man, that they might know their business henceforward, which was to be subservient to Christ in this office, and as Christ, in this office, has since that, as God-man and Mediator, been solemnly exalted and installed the King of heaven, and is thenceforward as God-man, Mediator, the Light, and as it were, the Sun of heaven, agreeable to Rev. xxi. 23, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof;" so this revelation that was made in heaven among the angels, of Christ's now having taken on him the office of a mediator between God and man, was as it were the first dawning of this light in heaven. When Christ ascended into heaven after his passion, and was solemnly installed in the throne, as King of heaven, then this sun rose in heaven, even the Lamb that is the light of the new Jerusalem But the light began to dawn immediately after the fall.

II. Presently upon this the gospel was first revealed on earth, in these words, Gen. iii. 15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." We must suppose, that God's intention of redeeming fallen men was first signified in heaven, before it was signified on earth, because the business of the angels as ministering spirits of the Mediator required it; for as soon as ever Christ had taken on him the work of a mediator, it was requisite that the angels should be ready immediately to be subservient to him in that office: so that the light first dawned in heaven; but very soon after the same was signified on earth. In those words of God there was an intimation of another surety to be appointed for man, after the first surety had failed. This was the first revelation of the covenant of grace; this was the first dawning of the light of the gospel on earth.

This lower world before the fall enjoyed noonday light; the light of the knowledge of God, the light of his glory, and the light of his favor. But when man fell, all this light was at once extinguished, and the world reduced back again to total darkness; a worse darkness than that which was in the beginning of the world, that we read of Gen. i. 2: "And the earth was without form, and void, and *darkness* was upon the face of the deep." This was a darkness a thousand times more remediless than that. Neither men nor angels could find out any way whereby this darkness might be scattered. This darkness appeared in its blackness then, when *Adam* and his wife saw that they were naked, and sewed fig leaves, and when they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, and hid themselves among the trees of the garden; and when God first called them to an account, and said to *Adam*, "What is this that thou hast done? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldest not eat?" Then we may suppose that their hearts were filled with shame and terror. But these words of God, Gen. iii. 15, were the first dawning of the light of the gospel after this darkness. Now first appeared some glimmering of light after this dismal darkness, which before this was without one glimpse of light, any beam of comfort, or any the least hope. It was an obscure revelation of the gospel; and was not made to *Adam* or *Eve* directly, but it was in what God said to the serpent. But yet it was very comprehensive, as might be easily shown would it not take up too much time.

Here was a certain intimation of a merciful design by "the seed of the

woman," which was like the first glimmerings of the light of the sun in the east when the day first dawns. This intimation of mercy was given them even before sentence was pronounced on either Adam or Eve, from tenderness to them to whom God designed mercy, lest they should be overborne with a sentence of condemnation, without having any thing held forth whence they could gather any hope.

One of those great things that were intended to be done by the work of redemption, is more plainly intimated here than the rest, viz., God's subduing his enemies under the feet of his Son. This was threatened now, and God's design of this was now first declared, which was the work Christ had now undertaken, and which he soon began, and carried on thenceforward, and will perfectly accomplish at the end of the world. Satan probably had triumphed greatly in the fall of man, as though he had defeated the designs of God in the creation of man and the world in general. But in these words God gives him a plain intimation, that he should not finally triumph, but that a complete victory and triumph should be obtained over him by the seed of the woman.

This revelation of the gospel in this verse was the first thing that Christ did in his prophetical office. You may remember, that it was said in the first of those three propositions that have been mentioned, that from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming and working out redemption, and were forerunners and earnests of it. And one of those things which God did in this time to prepare the way for Christ's coming into the world, was to foretell and promise it, as he did from time to time, from age to age, till Christ came. This was the first promise that ever was given of it, the first prediction that ever was made of it on earth.

III. Soon after this, the custom of sacrificing was appointed, to be a standing type of the sacrifice of Christ till he should come, and offer up himself a sacrifice to God. Sacrificing was not a custom first established by the Levitical law of Moses; for it had been a part of God's instituted worship long before, even from the beginning of God's visible church on earth. We read of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, offering sacrifice, and before them Noah, and before him Abel. And this was by divine appointment; for it was a part of God's worship in his church, that was offered up in faith, and that he accepted: which proves that it was by his institution; for sacrificing is no part of natural worship. The light of nature doth not teach men to offer up beasts in sacrifice to God; and seeing it was not enjoined by the law of nature, if it was acceptable to God, it must be by some positive command or institution; for God has declared his abhorrence of such worship as is taught by the precept of men without his institution: Isa. xxix. 13. "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men; therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work," &c. And such worship as hath not a warrant from divine institution, cannot be offered up in faith, because faith has no foundation where there is no divine appointment. It cannot be offered up in faith of God's acceptance; for men have no warrant to hope for God's acceptance, in that which is not of his appointment, and in that to which he hath not promised his acceptance; and therefore it follows, that the custom of offering sacrifices to God was instituted soon after the fall; for the Scripture teaches us, that Abel offered "the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof," Gen. iv. 4; and that he was accepted of God in this offering.

Heb. xi. 4. And there is nothing in the story that looks as though the institution was first given then, when Abel offered up that sacrifice to God; but it appears as though Abel only therein complied with a custom already established.

And it is very probable that it was instituted immediately after God had revealed the covenant of grace, in Gen. iii. 15; which covenant and promise was the foundation on which the custom of sacrificing was built. That promise was the first stone that was laid towards this glorious building, the work of redemption, which will be finished at the end of the world. And the next stone which was laid upon that, was the institution of sacrifices, to be a type of the *great Sacrifice.*

The next thing that we have an account of after God had pronounced sentence on the serpent, on the woman, and on the man, was, that God made them coats of skins, and clothed them; which, by the generality of divines, are thought to be the skins of beasts slain in sacrifice; for we have no account of any thing else that should be the occasion of man's slaying beasts, but only to offer them in sacrifice, till after the flood. Men were not wont to eat the flesh of beasts as their common food till after the flood. The first food of man in paradise before the fall was the fruit of the trees of paradise; and when he was turned out of paradise after the fall, then his food was the herb of the field: Gen. iii. 18, "And thou shalt eat of the herb of the field." The first grant that he had to eat flesh as his common food was after the flood: Gen. ix. 3, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you: even as the green herb have I given you all things." So that it is likely that these skins that Adam and Eve were clothed with, were the skins of their sacrifices. God's clothing them with these was a lively figure of their being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. This clothing was no clothing of their own obtaining; but it was God that gave it them. It is said, "God made them coats of skins, and clothed them;" as the righteousness our naked souls are clothed with, is not our righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God. It is he only clothes the naked soul.

Our first parents, who were naked, were clothed at the expense of life. Beasts were slain, and resigned up their lives a sacrifice to God, to afford clothing to them to cover their nakedness. So doth Christ, to afford clothing to our naked souls. The skin signifies the life. So Job ii. 4: "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life;" i. e. *life for life.* Thus our first parents were covered with skins of sacrifices, as the tabernacle in the wilderness, which signified the church, was, when it was covered with rams, skins died red, as though they were dipped in blood, to signify that Christ's righteousness was wrought out through the pains of death, under which he shed his precious blood.

We observed before, that the light that the church enjoyed from the fall of man, till Christ came, was like the light which we enjoy in the night; not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the moon and stars; which light did foreshow Christ, the Sun of righteousness, that was afterwards to arise. This light of the Sun of righteousness to come they had chiefly two ways: one was by predictions of Christ to come, whereby his coming was foretold and promised; the other was by types and shadows, whereby his coming and redemption were prefigured. The first thing that was done to prepare the way for Christ in the former of these ways, was in that promise that was just taken notice of in the foregoing particular; and the first thing of the latter kind, viz., of types, to foreshow Christ's coming, was that institu-

tion of sacrifices that we are now upon. As that promise in Gen. iii. 15 was the first dawn of gospel light after the fall in prophecy; so the institution of sacrifices was the first hint of it in types. The giving of that promise was the first thing that was done after the fall, in this work, in Christ's prophetical office; the institution of sacrifices was the first thing that we read of after the fall, by which especially Christ exhibited himself in his priestly office.

The institution of sacrifices was a great thing done towards preparing the way for Christ's coming, and working out redemption. For the sacrifices of the Old Testament were the main of all the Old Testament types of Christ and his redemption; and it tended to establish in the minds of God's visible church, the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice, in order to the Deity's being satisfied for sin; and so prepared the way for the reception of the glorious gospel, that reveals the great sacrifice in the visible church, and not only so, but through the world of mankind. For from this institution of sacrifices that was after the fall, all nations derived the custom of sacrificing. For this custom of offering up sacrifices to the gods, to atone for their sins, was common to all nations. No nation, however, barbarous, was found without it anywhere. This is a great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion; for no nation, but only the Jews, could tell how they came by this custom, or to what purpose it was, to offer sacrifices to their deities. The light of nature did not teach them any such thing. That did not teach them that the gods were hungry, and fed upon the flesh which they burnt in sacrifice; and yet they all had this custom; of which no other account can be given, but that they derived it from Noah, who had it from his ancestors, on whom God had enjoined it as a type of the great sacrifice of Christ. However, by this means all nations of the world had their minds possessed with this notion, that an atonement or sacrifice for sin was necessary; and a way was made for their more readily receiving the great doctrine of the gospel of Christ, which teaches us the atonement and sacrifice of Christ.

IV. God did soon after the fall begin actually to save the souls of men through Christ's redemption. In this, Christ, who had lately taken upon him the work of Mediator between God and man, did first begin that work, wherein he appeared in the exercise of his kingly office, as in the sacrifices he was represented in his priestly office, and in the first prediction of redemption by Christ he had appeared in the exercise of his prophetical office. In that prediction the light of Christ's redemption first began to dawn in the prophecies of it; in the institution of sacrifices it first began to dawn in the types of it; in this, viz., his beginning actually to save men, it first began to dawn in the fruit of it.

It is probable, therefore, that Adam and Eve were the first fruits of Christ's redemption; it is probable by God's manner of treating them, by his comforting them as he did, after their awakenings and terrors. They were awakened, and ashamed with a sense of their guilt, after their fall, when their eyes were opened, and they saw that they were naked, and sewed fig-leaves to cover their nakedness; as the sinner, under the first awakenings, is wont to endeavor to hide the nakedness of his soul, by patching up a righteousness of his own. Then they were further terrified and awakened, by hearing the voice of God, as he was coming to condemn them. Their coverings of fig-leaves did not answer the purpose; but notwithstanding these, they ran to hide themselves among the trees of the garden, because they were naked, not daring to trust to their fig-leaves to hide their nakedness from God. Then they were further

awakened by God's calling of them to a strict account. But while their terrors were raised to such a height, and they stood, as we may suppose, trembling and astonished before their judge, without any thing to catch hold of whence they could gather any hope, then God took care to hold forth some encouragement to them, to keep them from the dreadful effects of despair under their awakenings, by giving a hint of a design of mercy by a Saviour, even before he pronounced sentence against them. And when after this he proceeded to pronounce sentence, whereby we may suppose their terrors were further raised, God soon after took care to encourage them, and to let them see, that he had not wholly cast them off, by taking a fatherly care of them in their fallen, naked and miserable state, by making them coats of skins and clothing them. Which also manifested an acceptance of those sacrifices that they offered to God for sin, that those were the skins of, which were types of what God had promised, when he said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" which promise, there is reason to think, they believed and embraced. Eve seems plainly to express her hope in, and dependence on that promise, in what she says at the birth of Cain, Gen. iv. 1, "I have gotten a man from the Lord;" i. e. as God has promised, that my seed should bruise the serpent's head; so now has God given me this pledge and token of it, that I have a seed born. She plainly owns, that this her child was from God, and hoped that her promised seed was to be of this her eldest son; though she was mistaken, as *Abraham* was with respect to *Ishmael*, as *Jacob* was with respect to *Esau*, and as *Samuel* was with respect to the first born of *Jesse*. And especially does what she said at the birth of Seth, express her hope and dependence on the promise of God; see ver. 25: "For God hath appointed me another seed, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

Thus it is exceeding probable, if not evident, that as Christ took on him the work of Mediator as soon as man fell; so he now immediately began his work of redemption in its effect, and that he immediately encountered his great enemy the devil, whom he had undertaken to conquer, and rescued those two first captives out of his hands; therein baffling him, soon after his triumph for the victory he had obtained over them, whereby he had made them his captives. And though he was, as it were, sure of them and all their posterity, Christ the Redeemer soon showed him, that he was mistaken, and that *he* was able to subdue him, and deliver fallen man. He let him see it, in delivering those first captives of his; and so soon gave him an instance of the fulfilment of that threatening, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" and in this instance a presage of the fulfilment of one great thing he had undertaken, viz., his subduing all his enemies under his feet.

After this we have another instance of redemption in one of their children, viz., in righteous Abel, as the Scripture calls him, whose soul perhaps was the first that went to heaven through Christ's redemption. In him we have at least the first instance of the death of a redeemed person that is recorded in Scripture. If he was the first, then as the redemption of Christ began to dawn before in the souls of men in their conversion and justification, in him it first began to dawn in glorification; and in him the angels began first to do the part of ministering spirits to Christ, in going forth to conduct the souls of the redeemed to glory. And in him the elect angels in heaven had the first opportunity to see so wonderful a thing as the soul of one of the fallen race of mankind, that had been sunk by the fall into such an abyss of sin and misery, brought to heaven, and in the enjoyment of heavenly glory, which was a much greater thing than if they had seen him returned to the earthly

paradise. Thus they by this saw the glorious effect of Christ's redemption, in the great honor and happiness that was procured for sinful miserable creatures by it.

V. The next remarkable thing that God did in the farther carrying on of this great affair of redemption, that I shall take notice of, was the first remarkable pouring out of the Spirit through Christ that ever was, which was in the days of *Enos*. This seems to have been the next remarkable thing that was done toward erecting this glorious building that God had begun and laid the foundation of in Christ the Mediator. We read, in Gen. iv. 26, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The meaning of these words has been considerably controverted among divines. We cannot suppose the meaning is, that that time was the first that ever men performed the duty of prayer. Prayer is a duty of natural religion, and a duty to which a spirit of piety does most naturally lead men. Prayer is as it were the very breath of a spirit of piety; and we cannot suppose, therefore, that those holy men that had been before for above two hundred years, had lived all that while without any prayer. Therefore some divines think, that the meaning is, that then men first began to perform public worship, or to call upon the name of the Lord in public assemblies. Whether it be so to be understood or no, yet so much must necessarily be understood by it, viz., that there was something new in the visible church of God with respect to the duty of prayer, or calling upon the name of the Lord; that there was a great addition to the performance of this duty; and that in some respect or other it was carried far beyond what it ever had been before, which must be the consequence of a remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God.

If it was now first that men were stirred up to get together in assemblies to help and assist one another in seeking God, so as they never had done before, it argues something extraordinary as the cause; and could be from nothing but uncommon influences of God's Spirit. We see by experience, that a remarkable pouring out of God's Spirit is always attended with such an effect, viz., a great increase of the performance of the duty of prayer. When the Spirit of God begins a work on men's hearts, it immediately sets them to calling on the name of the Lord. As it was with Paul after the Spirit of God had laid hold of him, then the next news is, "Behold, he prayeth!" So it has been in all remarkable pourings out of the Spirit of God that we have any particular account of in Scripture; and so it is foretold it will be at the great pouring out of the Spirit of God in the latter days. It is foretold, that it will be poured out as a spirit of grace and supplication, Zech. xii. 10. See also Zeph. iii. 9: "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

And when it is said, "Then *began* men to call upon the name of the Lord," no more can be intended by it, than that this was the first remarkable season of this nature that ever was. It was the beginning, or the first, of such a kind of work of God, such a pouring out of the Spirit of God. After such a manner, such an expression is commonly used in Scripture: so, 1 Sam. xiv. 35. "And *Saul* built an altar unto the Lord; the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord." In the Hebrew it is, as you may see in the margin, "that altar he began to build unto the Lord." Heb. ii. 3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which first *began* to be spoken by the Lord?"

It may here be observed, that from the fall of man, to this day wherein we live, the work of redemption in its effect has mainly been carried on by re-

markable pourings out of the Spirit of God. Though there be a more constant influence of God's Spirit always in some degree attending his ordinances; yet the way in which the greatest things have been done towards carrying on this work, always has been by remarkable pourings out of the Spirit at special seasons of mercy, as may fully appear hereafter in our further prosecution of the subject we are upon. And this pouring out of the Spirit in the days of *Enos*, was the first remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God that ever was. There had been a saving work of God on the hearts of some before; but now God was pleased to grant a more large effusion of his Spirit, for the bringing in a harvest of souls to Christ; so that in this we see that great building that is the subject of our present discourse, which God laid the foundation of immediately after the fall of man, carried on further, and built higher than ever it had been before.

VI. The next thing I shall take notice of, is the eminently holy life of *Enoch*, who we have reason to think was a saint of greater eminency than any ever had been before him; so that in this respect the work of redemption was carried on to a greater height than ever it had been before. With respect to its effect in the visible church in general, we observed just now how it was carried higher in the days of *Enos* than ever it had been before. Probably Enoch was one of the saints of that harvest; for he lived all the days that he did live on earth, in the days of *Enos*. And with respect to the degree to which this work was carried in the soul of a particular person, it was raised to a greater height in Enoch than ever before. His soul, as it was built on Christ, was built up in holiness to a greater height than there had been any instance of before. He was a wonderful instance of Christ's redemption, and the efficacy of his grace.

VII. In *Enoch's* time, God did more expressly reveal the coming of Christ than he had done before, in the prophecy of *Enoch* that we have an account of in the 14th and 15th verses of the Epistle of Jude: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Here Enoch prophesies of the coming of Christ. It does not seem to be confined to any particular coming of Christ; but it has respect in general to Christ's coming in his kingdom, and is fulfilled in a degree in both the first and second coming of Christ; and indeed in every remarkable manifestation Christ has made of himself in the world, for the saving of his people, and the destroying of his enemies. It is very parallel in this respect with many other prophecies of the coming of Christ, that were given under the Old Testament; and, in particular, it seems to be parallel with that great prophecy of Christ's coming in his kingdom that we have in the 7th chapter of Daniel, whence the Jews principally took their notion of the kingdom of heaven. See ver. 10: "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." And ver. 13, 14: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." And though

it is not unlikely that Enoch might have a more immediate respect in this prophecy to the approaching destruction of the old world by the flood, which was a remarkable resemblance of Christ's destruction of all his enemies at his second coming, yet it doubtless looked beyond the type to the antitype.

And as this prophecy of Christ's coming is more express than any had been before; so it is an instance of the increase of that gospel light that began to dawn presently after the fall of man; and is an instance of that building that is the subject of our present discourse, being yet further carried on, and built up higher than ever it had been before.

And here, by the way, I would observe, that the increase of gospel light, and the carrying on the work of redemption, as it respects the elect church in general, from the first erecting of the church to the end of the world, is very much after the same manner as the carrying on of the same work and the same light in a particular soul, from the time of its conversion, till it is perfected and crowned in glory. The work in a particular soul has its ups and downs; sometimes the light shines brighter, and sometimes it is a dark time; sometimes grace seems to prevail, at other times it seems to languish for a great while together, and corruption prevails, and then grace revives again. But in general, grace is growing: from its first infusion, till it is perfected in glory, the kingdom of Christ is building up in the soul.

So it is with respect to the great affair in general, as it relates to the universal subject of it, as it is carried on from the first beginning of it, after the fall, till it is perfected at the end of the world, as will more fully appear by a particular view of this affair from beginning to end, in the prosecution of this subject, if God give opportunity to carry it through as I propose.

VIII. The next remarkable thing towards carrying on this work, that we have an account of in Scripture, is, the translation of Enoch into heaven. The account we have of it is in Gen. v. 24: "And *Enoch* walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." Here Moses, in giving an account of the genealogy of those that were of the line of *Noah*, does not say concerning *Enoch*, he lived so long and he died, as he does of the rest; but, *he was not, for God took him*; i. e. he translated him; in body and soul carried him to heaven without dying, as it is explained in Heb. xi. 5: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." By this wonderful work of God, the work of redemption was carried to a greater height, in several respects, than it had been before.

You may remember, that when I was showing what were the great things that God aimed at in the work of redemption, or what the main things were that he intended to bring to pass; I among other things mentioned the perfect restoring the ruins of the fall with respect to the elect, and restoring man from that destruction that he had brought on himself, both in soul and body. Now this translation of *Enoch* was the first instance that ever was of restoring the ruins of the fall with respect to the body. There had been many instances of restoring the soul of man by Christ's redemption, but none of redeeming and actually saving the body, till now. All the bodies of the elect are to be saved as well as their souls. At the end of the world, all the bodies of the saints shall actually be redeemed, those that then shall have been dead, by a resurrection; and others, that then shall be living, by causing them to pass under a glorious change. There was a number of the bodies of saints raised and glorified, at the resurrection and ascension of Christ; and before that there was an instance of a body glorified in Elijah. But the first instance of all was this of Enoch, that we are now speaking of.

And the work of redemption by this was carried on further than ever it had been before; as, by this wonderful work of God, there was a great increase of gospel light to the church of God, in this respect, that hereby the church had a clearer manifestation of a future state, and of the glorious reward of the saints in heaven. We are told, 2 Tim. i. 10, "That life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel." And the more of this is brought to light, the more clearly does the light shine in that respect. What was said in the Old Testament of a future state, is very obscure, in comparison with the more full, plain, and abundant revelation given of it in the New. But yet even in those early days, the church of God, in this event, was favored with an instance of it set before their eyes, in that one of their brethren was actually taken up to heaven without dying; which we have all reason to think the church of God knew then, as they afterwards knew Elijah's translation. And as this was a clearer manifestation of a future state than the church had had before, so it was a pledge or earnest of that future glorification of all the saints which God intended through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

IX. The next thing that I shall observe, was the upholding the church of God in the family of which Christ was to proceed, in the time of that great and general defection of the world of mankind that was before the flood. The church of God, in all probability, was small, in comparison with the rest of the world, from the beginning of the time that mankind first began to multiply on the face of the earth, or from the time of *Cain's* defection, and departing from among the people of God; the time we read of, Gen. iv. 16, "When *Cain* went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of *Nod*;" which being interpreted, is the land of banishment. I say, from this time of *Cain's* departure and separation from the church of God, it is probable that the church of God was small in comparison with the rest of the world. The church seems to have been kept up chiefly in the posterity of *Seth*; for this was the seed that God appointed instead of *Abel*, whom *Cain* slew. But we cannot reasonably suppose, that *Seth's* posterity were one fiftieth part of the world: "for *Adam* was one hundred and thirty years old when *Seth* was born." But *Cain*, who seems to have been the ringleader of those that were not of the church, was *Adam's* eldest child, and probably was born soon after the fall, which doubtless was soon after *Adam's* creation; so that there was time for *Cain* to have many sons before *Seth* was born, and besides many other children, that probably Adam and Eve had before this time, agreeably to God's blessing that he gave them, when he said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth;" and many of these children might have children. The story of *Cain* before *Seth* was born, seems to represent as though there were great numbers of men on the earth: Gen. iv. 14, 15, "Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth: and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore, whosoever slayeth *Cain*, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon *Cain*, lest any, finding him, should kill him." And all those that were then in being when *Seth* was born, must be supposed then to stand in equal capacity of multiplying their posterity with him; and therefore, as I said before, *Seth's* posterity were but a small part of the inhabitants of the world.

But after the days of *Enos* and *Enoch* (for *Enoch* was translated before *Enos* died), I say, after their days, the church of God greatly diminished, in proportion as multitudes that were of the line of *Seth*, and had been born in the church of God, fell away, and joined with the wicked world, principally by means of

intermarriages with them; as Gen. vi. 1, 2, and 4, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.—There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown." By the *sons of God* here, are doubtless meant the children of the church. It is a denomination often given them in Scripture. They intermarried with the wicked world, and so had their hearts led away from God; and there was a great and continual defection from the church. And the church of God, that used to be a restraint on the wicked world, diminished exceedingly, and so wickedness went on without restraint. And Satan, that old serpent, the devil, that tempted our first parents, and set up himself as God of this world, raged exceedingly; and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, and the earth was filled with violence. It seemed to be deluged with wickedness now, as it was with water afterwards: and mankind in general were drowned in this deluge; almost all were swallowed up in it. And now Satan made a most violent and potent attempt to swallow up the church of God; and had almost done it. But yet God restored it in the midst of all this flood of wickedness and violence. He kept it up in that line of which Christ was to proceed. He would not suffer it to be destroyed, for a blessing was in it. The Lord the Redeemer was in this branch of mankind, and was afterwards to proceed from it. There was a particular family that was a root in which the great Redeemer of the world was, and whence the branch of righteousness was afterwards to shoot forth And therefore, however the branches were lopped off, and the tree seemed to be destroyed; yet God, in the midst of all this, kept alive this root, by his wonderful redeeming power and grace, so that the gates of hell could not prevail against it.

Thus I have shown how God carried on the great affair of redemption; how the building went on that God began after the fall, during this first period of the times of the Old Testament, viz., from the fall of man, till God brought the flood on the earth. And I would take notice upon it, that though the history which *Moses* gives of the great works of God during that space be very short; yet it is exceeding comprehensive and instructive. And it may also be profitable for us here to observe, the efficacy of that purchase of redemption that had such great effects even in the old world so many ages before Christ appeared himself to purchase redemption, that his blood should have such great efficacy so long before it was shed.

PART II.

From the Flood to the calling of Abraham.

I PROCEED now to show how the same work was carried on through the *second period* of the Old Testament, that *from the beginning of the flood till the calling of Abraham.* For though that mighty, overflowing, universal deluge of waters overthrew the world; yet it did not overthrow this building of God, the work of redemption. But this went on yet; and instead of being overthrown, continued to be built up, and was carried on to a further preparation for the

great Savior's coming into the world, and working out redemption for his people. And here,

I. The flood itself was a work of God that belonged to this great affair, and tended to promote it. All the great and mighty works of God from the fall of man to the end of the world, are reducible to this work, and, if seen in a right view of them, will appear as parts of it, and so many steps that God has taken in order to it, or as carrying it on; and doubtless so great a work, so remarkable and universal a catastrophe, as the deluge was, cannot be excepted. It was a work that God wrought in order to it, as thereby God removed out of the way the enemies and obstacles of it, that were ready to overthrow it.

Satan seems to have been in a dreadful rage just before the flood, and his rage then doubtless was, as it always has been, chiefly against the church of God to overthrow it; and he had filled the earth with violence and rage against it. He had drawn over almost all the world to be on his side, and they listed under his banner against Christ and his church. We read, that the earth "was filled with violence;" and doubtless that violence was chiefly against the church, in fulfilment of what was foretold, *I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed.* And their enmity and violence was so great, and the enemies of the church so numerous, the whole world being against the church, that it was come to the last extremity. Noah's reproofs, and his preaching of righteousness, were utterly disregarded. God's Spirit had striven with them a hundred and twenty years, and all in vain; and the church was almost swallowed up. It seems to have been reduced to so narrow limits, as to be confined to one family And there was no prospect of any thing else but of their totally swallowing up the church, and that in a very little time; and so wholly destroying that small root that had the blessing in it, or whence the Redeemer was to proceed.

And therefore God's destroying those enemies of the church by the flood, belongs to this affair of redemption: for it was one thing that was done in fulfilment of the covenant of grace, as it was revealed to *Adam*: I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head." This destruction was only a destruction of the seed of the serpent, in the midst of their most violent rage against the seed of the woman, and so delivering the seed of the woman from them, when in utmost peril by them.

We read of scarce any great destruction of nations anywhere in Scripture, but that one main reason given for it is, their enmity and injuries against God's church: and doubtless this was one main reason of the destruction of all nations by the flood. The giants that were in those days, in all likelihood, got themselves their renown by their great exploits against heaven, and against Christ and his church, the remaining sons of God that had not corrupted themselves.

We read that just before the world shall be destroyed by fire, the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth, shall gather together against the church as the sand of the sea, and shall go up on the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints above, and the beloved city; and then fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour them, Rev. xx. 8, 9. And it seems as though there was that which was very parallel to it, just before the world was destroyed by water. And therefore their destruction was a work of God that did as much belong to the work of redemption, as the destruction of the *Egyptians* belonged to the redemption of the children of Isreal out of Egypt, or as the destruction of Sennacherib's mighty army, that had compassed about Jerusalem to destroy it, belonged to God's redemption of that city from them.

By means of this flood, all the enemies of God's church, against whom that little handful had no strength, were swept off at once. God took their part, and appeared for them against their enemies, and drowned those of whom they had been afraid in the flood of water, as he drowned the enemies of Israel that pursued them, in the Red Sea.

Indeed God could have taken other methods to deliver his church: he could have converted all the world instead of drowning it; and so he could have taken another method than drowning the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea. But that is no argument, that the method that he did take, was not a method to show his redeeming mercy to them.

By the wicked world's being drowned, the wicked, the enemies of God's people, were dispossessed of the earth, and the whole world given to Noah and his family to possess in quiet; as God made room for the *Israelites* in *Canaan*, by casting out their enemies from before them. And God's thus taking the possession of the enemies of the church, and giving it all to his church, was agreeable to that promise of the covenant of grace, Psal. xxxvii. 9, 10, 11: "For evil doers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

II. Another thing here belonging to the same work, was God's so wonderfully preserving that family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, when all the rest of the world was drowned. God's drowning the world, and saving *Noah* and his family, both were works reducible to this great work. The saving *Noah* and his family belonged to it two ways. As that family was the family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, and as that family was the church that he had redeemed, it was the mystical body of Christ that was there saved. The manner of God's saving those persons, when all the world besides was so overthrown, was very wonderful and remarkable. It was a wonderful and remarkable type of the redemption of Christ, of that redemption that is sealed by the baptism of water, and is so spoken of in the New Testament, as 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." That water that washed away the filth of the world, that cleared the world of wicked men, was a type of the blood of Christ, that takes away the sin of the world. That water that delivered Noah and his sons from their enemies, is a type of the blood that delivers God's church from their sins, their worst enemies. That water that was so plentiful and abundant, that it filled the world, and reached above the tops of the highest mountains, was a type of that blood, the sufficiency of which is so abundant, that it is sufficient for the whole world; sufficient to bury the highest mountains of sin. The ark that was the refuge and hiding place of the church in this time of storm and flood, was a type of Christ, the true hiding place of the church, from the storms and floods of God's wrath.

III. The next thing I would observe is, the new grant of the earth God made to Noah and his family immediately after the flood, as founded on the covenant of grace. The sacrifice of Christ was represented by Noah's building an altar to the Lord, and offering a sacrifice of every clean beast, and every clean fowl. And we have an account of God's accepting this sacrifice. And

thereupon he blessed Noah, and established his covenant with him, and with his seed, promising to destroy the earth in like manner no more; signifying how that it is by the sacrifice of Christ that God's favor is obtained, and his people are in safety from God's destroying judgments, and do obtain the blessing of the Lord. And God now, on occasion of this sacrifice that Noah offered to God, gives him and his posterity a new grant of the earth; a new power of dominion over the creatures, as founded on that sacrifice, and so founded on the covenant of grace. And so it is to be looked upon as a diverse grant from that which was made to Adam, that we have Gen. i. 28: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Which grant was not founded on the covenant of grace; for it was given to Adam while he was under the covenant of works, and therefore was antiquated when that covenant ceased. The first grant of the earth to Adam was founded on the first covenant; and therefore, when the first covenant was broken, the right conveyed to him by that first covenant was forfeited and lost. And hence it came to pass, that the earth was taken away from mankind by the flood: for the first grant was forfeited; and God had never made another after that, till after the flood. If the first covenant had not been broken, God never would have drowned the world, and so have taken it away from mankind: for then the first grant made to mankind would have stood good. But that was broken; and so God after a while, destroyed the earth, when the wickedness of man was great.

But after the flood, on Noah's offering a sacrifice that represented the sacrifice of Christ, God in smelling a sweet savor, or accepting that sacrifice, as it was a representation of the true sacrifice of Christ, which is a sweet savor indeed to God, he gives Noah a new grant of the earth, founded on that sacrifice of Christ, or that covenant of grace which is by that sacrifice of Christ, with a promise annexed, that now the earth should no more be destroyed, till the consummation of all things; as you may see in Gen. viii. 20, 21, 22, and chap. ix. 1, 2, 3, 7. The reason why such a promise, that God would no more destroy the earth, was added to this grant made to Noah, and not to that made to Adam, was because this was founded on the covenant of grace, of which Christ was the surety, and therefore could not be broken. And therefore it comes to pass now that though the wickedness of man has dreadfully raged, and the earth has been filled with violence and wickedness thousands of times, and one age after another, and much more dreadful and aggravated wickedness than the world was full of before the flood, being against so much greater light and mercy; especially in these days of the gospel: yet God's patience holds out; God does not destroy the earth; his mercy and forbearance abide according to his promise; and his grant established with Noah and his sons abides firm and good, being founded on the covenant of grace.

IV. On this God renews with Noah and his sons the covenant of grace, Gen. ix. 9, 10: "And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you," &c.; which was the covenant of grace; which even the brute creation have this benefit of, that it shall never be destroyed again until the consummation of all things. When we have this expression in Scripture, *my covenant*, it commonly is to be understood of the covenant of grace. The manner of expression, "I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you," shows plainly, that it was a covenant already in being, that had been made already,

and that Noah would understand what covenant it was by that denomination, viz., the covenant of grace.

V. God's disappointing the design of building the city and tower of Babel. This work of God belongs to the great work of redemption. For that building was undertaken in opposition to this great building of God that we are speaking of. Men's going about to build such a city and tower was an effect of the corruption that mankind were now soon fallen into. This city and tower was set up in opposition to the city of God, as the god that they built it to, was their pride. Being sunk into a disposition to forsake the true God, the first idol they set up in his room, was themselves, their own glory and fame. And as this city and tower had their foundation laid in the pride and vanity of men, and the haughtiness of their minds, so it was built on a foundation exceedingly contrary to the nature of the foundation of the kingdom of Christ, and his redeemed city, which has its foundation laid in humility.

Therefore God saw that it tended to frustrate the design of that great building that was founded, not in the haughtiness of men, but Christ's blood; and therefore the thing that they did displeased the Lord, and he baffled and confounded the design, and did not suffer them to bring it to perfection; as God will frustrate and confound all other buildings, that are set up in opposition to the great building of the work of redemption.

In the second chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet is foretelling God's setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world, he foretells how God will, in order to it, bring down the haughtiness of men, and how the day of the Lord shall be on *every high tower*, and upon *every fenced wall*, &c. Christ's kingdom is established, by bringing down every high thing to make way for it: 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, "For the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." What is done in a particular soul, to make way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom, is to destroy Babel in that soul.

They intended to have built Babel up to heaven. That building that is the subject we are upon, is a building that is intended to be built so high, that its top shall reach to heaven indeed, as it will to the highest heavens at the end of the world, when it shall be finished: and therefore God would not suffer the buildings of his enemies, that they designed to build up to heaven in opposition to it, to prosper. If they had gone on and prospered in building that city and tower, it might have kept the world of wicked men, the enemies of the church, together, as that was their design. They might have remained united in one vast, powerful city; and so they might have been too powerful for the city of God, and quite swallowed it up.

This city of Babel is the same with the city of Babylon; for Babylon in the original is Babel. But Babylon was a city that is always spoken of in Scripture as chiefly opposite to the city of God. Babylon, and Jerusalem, or Zion, are often opposed to each other, both in the Old Testament and New. This city was a powerful and terrible enemy to the city of God afterwards, notwithstanding this great check put to the building of it in the beginning. But it might have been, and probably would have been vastly more powerful and able to vex and destroy the church of God, if it had not been thus checked.

Thus it was in kindness to his church in the world, and in prosecution of the great design of redemption, that God put a stop to the building of the city and tower of Babel.

VI. The dispersing of the nations, and dividing the earth among its inhabit-

ants, immediately after God had caused the building of Babel to cease. This was done so as most to suit that great design of redemption. And particularly, God therein had an eye to the future propagation of the gospel among the nations. They were so placed, the bounds of their habitation so limited round about the land of Canaan, the place laid out for the habitation of God's people, as most suited the design of propagating the gospel among them: Deut. xxxii. 8, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Acts xvii. 26, 27, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." The land of Canaan was the most conveniently situated of any place in the world for the purpose of spreading the light of the gospel thence among the nations in general. The inhabited world was chiefly in the Roman empire in the times immediately after Christ, which was in the countries round about Jerusalem, and so properly situated for the purpose of diffusing the light of the gospel among them from that place. The devil seeing the advantage of this situation of the nations for promoting the great work of redemption, and the disadvantage of it with respect to the interests of his kingdom, afterward led away many nations into the remotest parts of the world, to that end, to get them out of the way of the gospel. Thus he led some into America; and others into northern cold regions, that are almost inaccessible.

VII. Another thing I would mention in this period, was God's preserving the true religion in the line from which Christ was to proceed, when the world in general apostatized to idolatry, and the church were in imminent danger of being swallowed up in the general corruption. Although God had lately wrought so wonderfully for the deliverance of his church, and had shown so great mercy towards it, as for its sake even to destroy all the rest of the world; and although he had lately renewed and established his covenant of grace with Noah and his sons: yet so prone is the corrupt heart of man to depart from God, and to sink into the depths of wickedness, and so prone to darkness, delusion, and idolatry, that the world soon after the flood fell into gross idolatry; so that before Abraham the distemper was become almost universal. The earth was become very corrupt at the time of the building of Babel; and even God's people themselves, even that line from which Christ was to come, were corrupted in a measure with idolatry: Josh. xxiv. 2, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and *they served other gods.*" The other side of the flood means beyond the river Euphrates, where the ancestors of Abraham lived.

We are not to understand, that they where wholly drawn off to idolatry, to forsake the true God. For God is said to be the God of Nahor: Gen. xxxi 53, "The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of *their fathers*, judge betwixt us." But they only partook in some measure of the general and almost universal corruption of the times; as Solomon was in a measure infected with idolatrous corruption; and as the children of Israel in Egypt are said to serve other gods, though yet there was the true church of God among them; and as there were images kept for a considerable time in the family of Jacob; the corruption being brought from Padan Aram, whence he fetched his wives.

This was the second time that the church was almost brought to nothing

by the corruption and general defection of the world from true religion. But still the true religion was kept in the family from which Christ was to proceed. Which is another instance of God's remarkably preserving his church in a time of a general deluge of wickedness; and wherein, although the god of this world raged, and had almost swallowed up God's church, yet God did not suffer the gates of hell to prevail against it.

PART III.

From the Calling of Abraham to Moses.

I PROCEED now to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the *third period* of the times of the Old Testament, beginning with *the calling of Abraham*, and extending to *Moses*. And here,

I. It pleased God now to separate that person of whom Christ was to come, from the rest of the world, that his church might be upheld in his family and posterity till Christ should come; as he did in calling Abraham out of his own country, and from his kindred, to go into a distant country, that God should show him, and bringing him first out of Ur of the Chaldees to Charran, and then to the land of Canaan.

It was before observed, that the corruption of the world with idolatry was now become general; mankind were almost wholly overrun with idolatry: God therefore saw it necessary, in order to uphold true religion in the world, that there should be a family separated from the rest of the world. It proved to be high time to take this course, lest the church of Christ should wholly be carried away with the apostasy. For the church of God itself, that had been upheld in the line of Abraham's ancestors, was already considerably corrupted, Abraham's own country and kindred had most of them fallen off; and without some extraordinary interposition of Providence, in all likelihood, in a generation or two more, the true religion in this line would have been extinct. And therefore God saw it to be time to call Abraham, the person in whose family he intended to uphold the true religion, out of his own country, and from his kindred, to a far distant country, that his posterity might there remain a people separate from all the rest of the world; that so the true religion might be upheld there, while all mankind besides were swallowed up in Heathenism.

The land of the Chaldees, that Abraham was called to go out of, was the country about Babel; Babel, or Babylon was the chief city of the land of Chaldea. Learned men suppose, by what they gather from some of the most ancient accounts of things, that it was in this land that idolatry first began; that Babel and Chaldea were the original and chief seat of the worship of idols, whence it spread into other nations. And therefore the land of the Chaldeans, or the country of Babylon, is in Scripture called *the land of graven images;* as you may see, Jer. l. 35, together with verse 38: "A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men.—A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols." God calls Abraham out of this idolatrous country, to a great distance from it. And when he came there, he gave him no inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on; but he remained a stranger and a sojourner, that he and his family might be kept separate from all the world.

This was a new thing: God had never taken such a method before. His church had not in this manner been separated from the rest of the world till now; but were wont to dwell with them, without any bar or fence to keep them separate; the mischievous consequences of which had been found once and again. The effect before the flood of God's people living intermingled with the wicked world, without any remarkable wall of separation, was, that the sons of the church joined in marriage with others, and thereby almost all soon became infected, and the church was almost brought to nothing. The method that God took then to fence the church was, to drown the wicked world, and save the church in the ark. And now the world, before Abraham was called, was become corrupt again. But now God took another method. He did not destroy the wicked world, and save Abraham, and his wife, and Lot, in an ark; but he calls these persons to go and live separate from the rest of the world.

This was a new thing, and a great thing, that God did toward the work of redemption. This thing was done now about the middle of the space of time between the fall of man and the coming of Christ; and there were about two thousand years yet to come before Christ the great Redeemer was to come. But by this calling of Abraham, the ancestor of Christ, a foundation was laid for the upholding the church of Christ in the world, till Christ should come. For the world having become idolatrous, there was a necessity that the seed of the woman should be thus separated from the idolatrous world in order to that.

And then it was needful that there should be a particular nation separated from the rest of the world, to receive the types and prophecies that were needful to be given of Christ, to prepare the way for his coming; that to them might be committed the oracles of God; and that by them the history of God's great works of creation and providence might be upheld; and that so Christ might be born of this nation; and that from hence the light of the gospel might shine forth to the rest of the world. These ends could not be well obtained, if God's people through all these two thousand years, had lived intermixed with the Heathen world. So that this calling of Abraham may be looked upon as a kind of a new foundation laid for the visible church of God, in a more distinct and regular state, to be upheld and built up on this foundation from henceforward, till Christ should actually come, and then through him to be propagated to all nations. So that Abraham being the person in whom this foundation is laid, is represented in Scripture as though he were the father of all the church, the father of all them that believe; as it were a root whence the visible church thenceforward through Christ, Abraham's root and offspring, rose as a tree, distinct from all other plants; of which tree Christ was the branch of righteousness; and from which tree, after Christ came, the natural branches were broken off, and the Gentiles were grafted into the same tree. So that Abraham still remains the father of the church, or root of the tree, through Christ his seed. It is the same tree that flourishes from that small beginning, that was in Abraham's time, and has in these days of the gospel spread its branches over a great part of the earth, and will fill the whole earth in due time, and at the end of the world shall be transplanted from an earthly soil into the paradise of God.

II. There accompanied this a more particular and full revelation and confirmation of the covenant of grace than ever had been before. There had before this been, as it were, two particular and solemn editions or confirmations of this covenant; one at the beginning of the first period, which was that whereby the covenant of grace was revealed to our first parents soon after

the fall; the other at the beginning of the second period, whereby God solemnly renewed the covenant of grace with Noah and his family soon after the flood; and now there is a third, at the beginning of the third period, at and after the calling of Abraham. And it now being much nearer the time of the coming of Christ than when the covenant of grace was first revealed, it being, as was said before, about half way between the fall and the coming of Christ, the revelation of the covenant now was much more full than any that had been before. The covenant was now more particularly revealed. It was now revealed, not only that Christ should be; but it was revealed to Abraham, that he should be his seed; and it was now promised, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him. And God was much in the promises of this to Abraham. The first promise was when he first called him, Gen. xii. 2: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." And again the same promise was renewed after he came into the land of Canaan, chap. xiii. 14, &c. And the covenant was again renewed after Abraham had returned from the slaughter of the kings, chap. xv. 5, 6. And again, after his offering up Isaac, chap xxii. 16, 17, 18.

In this renewal of the covenant of grace with Abraham, several particulars concerning that covenant were revealed more fully than ever had been before; not only that Christ was to be of Abraham's seed, but also, the calling of the Gentiles, and the bringing all nations into the church, that all the families of the earth were to be blessed, was now made known. And then the great condition of the covenant of grace, which is faith, was now more fully made known. Gen. xv. 5, 6, "And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Which is much taken notice of in the New Testament, as that whence Abraham was called the father of them that believe.

And as there was now a further revelation of the covenant of grace, so there was a further confirmation of it by seals and pledges, than ever had been before; as, particularly, God did now institute a certain sacrament, to be a steady seal of this covenant in the visible church, till Christ should come, viz., circumcision. Circumcision was a seal of this covenant of grace, as appears by the first institution, as we have an account of it in the 17th chapter of Genesis. It there appears to be a seal of that covenant by which God promised to make Abraham a father of many nations, as appears by the 5th verse, compared with the 9th and 10th verses. And we are expressly taught, that it was a seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 11. Speaking of Abraham, the apostle says, "he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith."

As I observed before, God called Abraham, that his family and posterity might be kept separate from the rest of the world, till Christ should come, which God saw to be necessary on the forementioned accounts. And this sacrament was the principal wall of separation; it chiefly distinguished Abraham's seed from the world, and kept up a distinction and separation more than any other particular observance whatsoever.

And besides this, there were other occasional seals, pledges and confirmations, that Abraham had of this covenant; as, particularly, God gave Abraham a remarkable pledge of the fulfilment of the promise he had made him, in his victory over Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him. Chedorlaomer seems to have been a great emperor, that reigned over a great part of the world at that day; and though he had his seat at Elam, which was not much if any

thing short of a thousand miles distant from the land of Canaan, yet he extended his empire so as to reign over many parts of the land of Canaan, as appears by chap. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 7. It is supposed by learned men, that he was a king of the Assyrian empire at that day, which had been before begun by Nimrod at Babel. And as it was the honor of kings in those days to build new cities to be made the seat of their empire, as appears by Gen. x. 10, 11, 12; so it is conjectured, that he had gone forth and built him a city in Elam, and made that his seat; and that those other kings, who came with him, were his deputies in the several cities and countries where they reigned. But yet, as mighty an empire as he had, and as great an army as he now came with into the land where Abraham was, yet Abraham, only with his trained servants that were born in his own house, conquered, subdued, and baffled this mighty emperor, and the kings that came with him, and all their army. This he received of God as a pledge of what he had promised, viz., the victory that Christ his seed should obtain over the nations of the earth, whereby he should possess the gates of his enemies. It is plainly spoken of as such in the 41st of Isaiah. In that chapter is foretold the future glorious victory the church shall obtain over the nations of the world; as you may see in the 1st, 10th, and 15th verses, &c. But here this victory of Abraham over such a great emperor and his mighty forces, is spoken of as a pledge and earnest of this victory of the church, as you may see in the 2d and 3d verses: "Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet."

Another remarkable confirmation Abraham received of the covenant of grace, was when he returned from the slaughter of the kings; when Melchisedec the king of Salem, the priest of the most high God, that great type of Christ, met him, and blessed him, and brought forth bread and wine. The bread and wine signified the same blessings of the covenant of grace, that the bread and wine does in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. So that as Abraham had a seal of the covenant in circumcision that was equivalent to baptism, so now he had a seal of it equivalent to the Lord's supper. And Melchisedec's coming to meet him with such a seal of the covenant of grace, on the occasion of this victory of his over the kings of the north, confirms that that victory was a pledge of God's fulfilment of the same covenant; for that is the mercy that Melchisedec with his bread and wine takes notice of; as you may see by what he says in Gen. xiv. 19, 20.

Another confirmation that God gave Abraham of the covenant of grace, was the vision that he had in the deep sleep that fell upon him, of the smoking furnace, and burning lamp, that passed between the parts of the sacrifice, as in the latter part of the 15th chapter of Genesis. The sacrifice, as all sacrifices do, signified the sacrifice of Christ. The smoking furnace that passed through the midst of that sacrifice first, signified the sufferings of Christ. But the burning lamp that followed, which shone with a clear bright light, signifies the glory that followed Christ's sufferings, and was procured by them.

Another remarkable pledge that God gave Abraham of the fulfilment of the covenant of grace, was his giving of the child of whom Christ was to come, in his old age. This is spoken of as such in Scripture, Heb. xi. 11, 12 and also Rom. iv. 18, &c.

Again, another remarkable pledge that God gave Abraham of the fulfilment of the covenant of grace, was his delivering Isaac, after he was laid upon the

wood of the sacrifice to be slain. This was a confirmation of Abraham's faith in the promise that God had made of Christ, that he should be of Isaac's posterity; and was a representation of the resurrection of Christ; as you may see, Heb. xi. 17, 18, 19. And because this was given as a confirmation of the covenant of grace, therefore God renewed that covenant with Abraham on this occasion, as you may see, Gen. xxiv. 15, &c.

Thus you see how much more fully the covenant of grace was revealed and confirmed in Abraham's time than ever it had been before; by means of which, Abraham seems to have had a more clear understanding and sight of Christ the great Redeemer, and the future things that were to be accomplished by him, than any of the saints that had gone before. And therefore Christ takes notice of it, that Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it, and was glad, John viii. 56. So great an advance did it please God now to make in this building, which he had been carrying on from the beginning of the world.

III. The next thing that I would take notice of here, is God's preserving the patriarchs for so long a time in the midst of the wicked inhabitants of Canaan, and from all other enemies. The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were those of whom Christ was to proceed; and they were now separated from the world, that in them his church might be upheld. Therefore in preserving them, the great design of redemption was upheld and carried on. He preserved them and kept the inhabitants of the land where they sojourned from destroying them; which was a remarkable dispensation of Providence. For the inhabitants of the land were at that day exceedingly wicked, though they grew more wicked afterwards. This appears by Gen. xv. 16: "In the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Canaanites is not yet full:" as much as to say, Though it be very great, yet it is not full. And their great wickedness also appears by Abraham and Isaac's aversion to their children marrying any of the daughters of the land. Abraham, when he was old could not be content till he had made his servant swear that he would not take a wife for his son of the daughters of the land. And Isaac and Rebecca were content to send away Jacob to so great a distance as Padan Aram, to take him a wife thence. And when Esau married some of the daughters of the land, we are told, that they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca.

Another argument of their great wickedness, was the instances we have in Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which were some of the cities of Canaan, though they were probably distinguishingly wicked.

And they being thus wicked, were likely to have the most bitter enmity against these holy men; agreeably to what was declared at first, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." Their holy lives were a continual condemnation of their wickedness. And besides, it could not be otherwise, but that they must be much in reproving their wickedness, as we find Lot was in Sodom; who, we are told, vexed his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds, and was a preacher of righteousness to them.

And they were the more exposed to them, being strangers and sojourners in the land, and having no inheritance there as yet. Men are more apt to find fault with strangers, and to be irritated by any thing in them that offends them, as they were with Lot in Sodom. He very gently reproved their wickedness, and they say upon it, "This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a ruler and a judge;" and threatened what they would do to him

But God wonderfully preserved Abraham and Lot, and Isaac and Jacob

and their families, amongst them, though they were few in number, and they might quickly have destroyed them; which is taken notice of as a wonderful instance of God's preserving mercy toward his church, Psal. cv. 12, &c.: "When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; he suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

This preservation was, in some instances especially, very remarkable; those instances that we have an account of, wherein the people of the land were greatly irritated and provoked; as they were by Simeon and Levi's treatment of the Shechemites, as you may see in Gen. xxxiv. 30, &c. God then strangely preserved Jacob and his family, restraining the provoked people by an unusual terror on their minds, as you may see in Gen. xxxv. 5: "And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

And God's preserving them, not only from the Canaanites, is here to be taken notice of, but his preserving them from all others that intended mischief to them: as his preserving Jacob and his company, when pursued by Laban, full of rage, and a disposition to overtake him as an enemy: God met him, and rebuked him, and said to him, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad." How wonderfully did he also preserve him from Esau his brother, when he came forth with an army, with a full design to cut him off! How did God, in answer to his prayer, when he wrestled with Christ at Penuel, wonderfully turn Esau's heart, and make him, instead of meeting him as an enemy with slaughter and destruction, to meet him as a friend and brother, doing him no harm!

And thus was this handful, this little root that had the blessing of the Redeemer in it, preserved in the midst of enemies and dangers; which was not unlike to the preserving the ark in the midst of the tempestuous deluge.

IV. The next thing I would mention is, the awful destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighboring cities. This tended to promote the great design and work that is the subject of my present undertaking, two ways. It did so, as it tended powerfully to restrain the inhabitants of the land from injuring those holy strangers that God had brought to sojourn amongst them. Lot was one of those strangers; he came into the land with Abraham; and Sodom was destroyed for their abusive disregard of Lot, the preacher of righteousness, that God had sent among them. And their destruction came just upon their committing a most injurious and abominable insult on Lot, and the strangers that were come into his house, even those angels, whom they probably took to be some of Lot's former acquaintance come from the country that he came from, to visit him. They in a most outrageous manner beset Lot's house, intending a monstrous abuse and act of violence on those strangers that were come thither, and threatening to serve Lot worse than them.

But in the midst of this, God smote them with blindness; and the next morning the city and the country about it was overthrown in a most terrible storm of fire and brimstone; which dreadful destruction, as it was in the sight of the rest of the inhabitants of the land, and therefore greatly tended to restrain them from hurting those holy strangers any more; it doubtless struck a dread and terror on their minds, and made them afraid to hurt them, and probably was one principal means to restrain them, and preserve the patriarchs. And when that reason is given why the inhabitants of the land did not pur-

sue after Jacob, when they were so provoked by the destruction of the Shechemites, viz., "that the terror of the Lord was upon them," it is very probable, that this was the terror that was set home upon them. They remembered the amazing destruction of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, that came upon them upon their abusive treatment of Lot, and so durst not hurt Jacob and his family, though they were so much provoked to it.

Another way that this awful destruction tended to promote this great affair of redemption, was, that hereby God did remarkably exhibit the terrors of his law, to make men sensible of their need of redeeming mercy. The work of redemption never was carried on without this. The law, from the beginning, is made use of as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ.

But under the Old Testament there was much more need of some extraordinary, visible, and sensible manifestation of God's wrath against sin, than in the days of the gospel; since a future state, and the eternal misery of hell, is more clearly revealed, and since the awful justice of God against the sins of men has been so wonderfully displayed in the sufferings of Christ. And therefore the revelation that God gave of himself in those days, used to be accompanied with much more terror than it is in these days of the gospel. So when God appeared at Mount Sinai to give the law, it was with thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. But some external awful manifestations of God's wrath against sin, were on some accounts especially necessary before the giving of the law: and therefore before the flood, the terrors of the law handed down by tradition from Adam served. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years himself, to tell the church of God's awful threatenings denounced in the covenant made with him, and how dreadful the consequences of the fall were, as he was an eye witness and subject; and others that conversed with Adam, lived till the flood. And the destruction of the world by the flood served to exhibit the terrors of the law, and manifest the wrath of God against sin; and so to make men sensible of the absolute necessity of redeeming mercy. And some that saw the flood were alive in Abraham's time.

But this was now in a great measure forgotten; now therefore God was pleased again, in a most amazing manner, to show his wrath against sin, in the destruction of these cities; which was after such a manner as to be the liveliest image of hell of any thing that ever had been; and therefore the apostle Jude says, "They suffer the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude 7. God rained storms of fire and brimstone upon them. The way that they were destroyed probably was by thick flashes of lightning. The streams of brimstone were so thick as to burn up these cities; so that they perished in the flames of divine wrath. By this might be seen the dreadful wrath of God against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, which tended to show men the necessity of redemption, and so to promote that great work.

V. God again renewed and confirmed the covenant of grace to Isaac and to Jacob. He did so to Isaac, as you may see, Gen. xxvi. 3, 4: "And I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And afterwards it was renewed and confirmed to Jacob; first in Isaac's blessing of him, wherein he acted and spoke by extraordinary divine direction. In that blessing, the blessings of the covenant of grace were established with Jacob and his seed; as Gen. xxvii. 29: "Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow

down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." And therefore Esau, in missing of this blessing, missed of being blessed as an heir of the benefits of the covenant of grace.

This covenant was again renewed and confirmed to Jacob at Bethel, in his vision of the ladder that reached to heaven; which ladder was a symbol of the way of salvation by Christ, for the stone that Jacob rested on was a type of Christ, the stone of Israel, which the spiritual Israel or Jacob rests upon; as is evident, because this stone was on this occasion anointed, and was made use of as an altar. But we know that Christ is the anointed of God, and is the only true altar of God. While Jacob was resting on this stone and saw this ladder, God appears to him as his covenant God, and renews the covenant of grace with him; as in Gen. xxviii. 14: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

And Jacob had another remarkable confirmation of this covenant at Penuel, where he wrestled with God, and prevailed; where Christ appeared to him in a human form, in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to receive into a personal union with his divine nature.

And God renewed his covenant with him again, after he was come out of Padan Aram, and was come up to Bethel, to the stone that he had rested on, and where he had the vision of the ladder; as you may see in Gen. xxxv. 10, &c.

Thus the covenant of grace was now often renewed, much oftener than it had been before. The light of the gospel now began to shine much brighter as the time grew nearer that Christ should come.

VI. The next thing I would observe, is God's remarkably preserving the family of which Christ was to proceed from perishing by famine, by the instrumentality of Joseph. When there was a seven years' famine approaching, God was pleased, by a wonderful providence, to send Joseph into Egypt, there to provide for, and feed Jacob and his family, and to keep the holy seed alive, which otherwise would have perished. Joseph was sent into Egypt for that end, as he observes, Gen. l. 20: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to save much people alive." How often had this holy root, that had the future branch of righteousness, the glorious Redeemer, in it, been in danger of being destroyed! But God wonderfully preserved it.

This salvation of the house of Israel by the hand of Joseph, was upon some accounts very much a resemblance of the salvation of Christ. The children of Israel were saved by Joseph their kinsman and brother, from perishing by famine; as he that saves the souls of the spiritual Israel from spiritual famine is their near kinsman, and one that is not ashamed to call them brethren. Joseph was a brother, that they had hated, and sold, and as it were killed; for they had designed to kill him. So Christ is one that we naturally hate, and, by our wicked lives, have sold for the vain things of the world, and that by our sins we have slain. Joseph was first in a state of humiliation; he was a servant, as Christ appeared in the form of a servant; and then was cast into a dungeon, as Christ descended into the grave; and then when he rose out of the dungeon, he was in a state of great exaltation, at the king's right hand as his deputy, to reign over all his kingdom, to provide food, to preserve life; and being in this state of exaltation, he dispenses food to his brethren, and so gives them life; as Christ was exalted at God's right hand to be a

Prince and Saviour to his brethren, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, and them that hated, and had sold him.

VII. After this there was a prophecy given forth of Christ, on some accounts, more particular than ever any had been before, even that which was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah. This was more particular than ever any had been before, as it showed of whose posterity he was to be. When God called Abraham, it was revealed that he was to be of Abraham's posterity. Before, we have no account of any revelation concerning Christ's pedigree, confined to narrower limits than the posterity of Noah: after this it was confined to still narrower limits; for though Abraham had many sons, yet it was revealed, that Christ was to be of Isaac's posterity. And then it was limited more still: for when Isaac had two sons, it was revealed that Christ was to be of Israel's posterity. And now, though Israel had twelve sons, yet it is revealed that Christ should be of Judah's posterity: Christ is the lion of the tribe of Judah. Respect is chiefly had to his great acts, when it is said here, Gen. xlix. 8: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" And then this prediction is more particular concerning the time of Christ's coming, than any had been before; as in ver. 10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The prophecy here, of the calling of the Gentiles consequent on Christ's coming, seems to be more plain than any had been before, in the expression *to him shall the gathering of the people be.*

Thus you see how that gospel light which dawned immediately after the fall of man, gradually increases.

VIII. The work of redemption was carried on in this period, in God's wonderfully preserving the children of Israel in Egypt, when the power of Egypt was engaged utterly to destroy them. They seemed to be wholly in the hands of the Egyptians; they were their servants, and were subject to the power of Pharaoh; and Pharaoh set himself to weaken them with hard bondage. And when he saw that did not do, he set himself to extirpate the race of them, by commanding that every male child should be drowned. But after all that Pharaoh could do, God wonderfully preserved them; and, not only so, but increased them exceedingly; so that instead of being extirpated, they greatly multiplied.

IX. Here is to be observed, not only the preservation of the nation, but God's wonderfully preserving and upholding his invisible church in that nation, when in danger of being overwhelmed in the idolatry of Egypt. The children of Israel being long among the Egyptians, and being servants under them, and so not under advantages to keep God's ordinances among themselves, and maintain any public worship or public instruction, whereby the true religion might be upheld, and there being now no written word of God, they, by degrees, in a great measure, lost the true religion, and borrowed the idolatry of Egypt; and the greater part of the people fell away to the worship of their gods. This we learn by Ezek. xx. 6, 7, 8, and by chap. xxiii. 8.

This now was the third time that God's church was almost swallowed up and carried away with the wickedness of the world; once before the flood; the other time, before the calling of Abraham; and now the third time in Egypt. But yet God did not suffer his church to be quite overwhelmed; he

still saved it, like the ark in the flood, and as he saved Moses in the midst of the waters, in an ark of bulrushes, where he was in the utmost danger of being swallowed up. The true religion was still kept up with some, and God had still a people among them, even in this miserable, corrupt, and dark time The parents of Moses were true servants of God, as we may learn by Heb. xi. 23: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw that he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

I have now gone through the third period of the Old Testament time; and have shown how the work of redemption was carried on from the calling of Abraham to Moses; in which we have seen many great things done towards this work, and a great advancement of this building, beyond what had been before

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PART V.

From Moses to David.

I PROCEED to the *fourth period*, which reaches from Moses to David. I would show how the work of redemption was carried on through this also.

I. The first thing that offers itself to be considered, is the redemption of the church of God out of Egypt; the most remarkable of all the Old Testament redemptions of the church of God, and that which was the greatest pledge and forerunner of the future redemption of Christ, of any; and is much more insisted on in Scripture than any other of those redemptions. And indeed it was the greatest type of Christ's redemption of any providential event whatsoever. This redemption was by Jesus Christ, as is evident from this, that it was wrought by him that appeared to Moses in the bush; for that was the person that sent Moses to redeem that people. But that was Christ, as is evident, because he is called the angel of the Lord, Exod. iii. 2, 3. The bush represented the human nature of Christ, that is called the *branch*. The bush grew on Mount Sinai or Horeb, which is a word that signifies a dry place, as the human nature of Christ was *a root out of a dry ground*. The bush burning with fire, represented the sufferings of Christ, in the fire of God's wrath. It burned and was not consumed; so Christ, though he suffered extremely, yet perished not; but overcame at last, and rose from his sufferings. Because this great mystery of the incarnation and sufferings of Christ was here represented, therefore Moses says, "I will turn aside and behold this great sight." A great sight he might well call it, when there was represented, God manifest in the flesh, and suffering a dreadful death, and rising from the dead.

This glorious Redeemer was he that redeemed the church out of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh; as Christ, by his death and sufferings, redeemed his people from Satan, the spiritual Pharaoh. He redeemed them from hard service and cruel drudgery; as Christ redeems his people from the cruel slavery of sin and Satan. He redeemed them, as it is said, *from the iron furnace;* as Christ redeems his church from a furnace of fire and everlasting burnings. He redeemed them with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and great and terrible judgments on their enemies; as Christ with mighty power triumphs over *principalities and powers*, and executes terrible judgments on his church's enemies, bruising the serpent's head. He saved them, when others were destroyed, by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb;

as God's church is saved from death by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, when the rest of the world is destroyed. God brought forth the people sorely against the will of the Egyptians, when they could not bear to let them go; so Christ rescues his people out of the hands of the devil, sorely against his will, when his proud heart cannot bear to be overcome.

In that redemption, Christ did not only redeem the people from the Egyptians, but he redeemed them from the devils, the gods of Egypt; for before, they had been in a state of servitude to the gods of Egypt, as well as to the men. And Christ, the seed of the woman, did now, in a very remarkable manner, fulfil the curse on the serpent, in bruising his head: Exod. xii. 12, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment." Hell was as much and more engaged in that affair, than Egypt was. The pride and cruelty of Satan, that old serpent, was more concerned in it than Pharaoh's. He did his utmost against the people, and to his utmost opposed their redemption. But it is said, that when God redeemed his people out of Egypt, he broke the heads of the dragons in the waters, and broke the head of the leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderness, Psal. lxxiv. 12, 13, 14. God forced their enemies to let them go, that they might serve him; as also Zacharias observes with respect to the church under the gospel, Luke i. 74, 75.

The people of Israel went out with a high hand, and Christ went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire. There was a glorious triumph over earth and hell in that deliverance. And when Pharaoh and his hosts, and Satan by them, pursued the people, Christ overthrew them in the Red Sea; the Lord triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he cast into the sea, and there they slept their last sleep, and never followed the children of Israel any more; as all Christ's enemies are overthrown in his blood, which by its abundant sufficiency, and the greatness of the sufferings with which it was shed, may well be represented by a sea. The Red Sea did represent Christ's blood, as is evident, because the apostle compares the children of Israel's passage through the Red Sea to baptism, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. But we all know that the water of baptism represents Christ's blood.

Thus Christ, the angel of God's presence, in his love and his pity redeemed his people, and carried them in the days of old as on eagles' wings, so that none of their proud and spiteful enemies, neither Egyptians nor devils, could touch them.

This was quite a new thing that God did towards this great work of redemption. God never had done any thing like it before; Deut. iv. 32, 33, 34. This was a great advancement of the work of redemption, that had been begun and carried on from the fall of man; a great step taken in divine providence towards a preparation for Christ's coming into the world, and working out his great and eternal redemption: for this was the people of whom Christ was to come. And now we may see how the plant flourished that God had planted in Abraham. Though the family of which Christ was to come, had been in a degree separated from the rest of the world before, in the calling of Abraham; yet that separation that was then made, appeared not to be sufficient, without further separation. For though by that separation, they were kept as strangers and sojourners, kept from being united with other people in the same political societies; yet they remained mixed among them, by which means, as it had proved, they had been in danger of wholly losing

the true religion, and of being overrun with the idolatry of their neighbors God now, therefore, by this redemption, separated them as a nation from all other nations, to subsist by themselves in their own political and ecclesiastical state, without having any concern with the Heathen nations, that they might so be kept separate till Christ should come; and so that the church of Christ might be upheld, and might keep the oracles of God, till that time; that in them might be kept up those types and prophecies of Christ, and those histories, and other divine previous instructions, that were necessary to prepare the way for Christ's coming.

II. As this people were separated to be God's peculiar people, so all other people upon the face of the whole earth were wholly rejected and given over to Heathenism. This, so far as the providence of God was concerned in it, belongs to the great affair of redemption that we are upon, and was one thing that God ordered in his providence to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and the great salvation he was to accomplish in the world; for it was only to prepare the way for the more glorious and signal victory and triumph of Christ's power and grace over the wicked and miserable world, and that Christ's salvation of the world of mankind might become the more sensible. This is the account the Scripture itself gives us of the matter, Rom. xi. 30, 31, 32. The apostle there speaking to the Gentiles that had formerly been Heathens, says: "As ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all:" i. e., it was the will of God, that the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, should be concluded in visible and professed unbelief, that so God's mercy and Christ's salvation towards them all might be visible and sensible. For the apostle is not speaking only of that unbelief that is natural to all God's professing people as well as others, but that which appears, and is visible; such as the Jews fell into, when they openly rejected Christ, and ceased to be a professing people. The apostle observes how that first the Gentiles, even the Gentile nations, were included in a professed unbelief and open opposition to the true religion, before Christ came, to prepare the way for the calling of the Gentiles, which was soon after Christ came, that God's mercy might be the more visible to them; and that the Jews were rejected, and apostatized from the visible church, to prepare the way for the calling of the Jews, which shall be in the latter days: so that it may be seen of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, that they are visibly redeemed by Christ, from being visibly aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope, and without God in the world.

We cannot determine precisely at what time the apostasy of the Gentile nations from the true God, or their being concluded in visible unbelief, became universal. Their falling away was a gradual thing, as we observed before. It was general in Abraham's time, but not universal: for then we find Melchisedec, one of the kings of Canaan, was priest of the most high God. And after this the true religion was kept up for a while among some of the rest of Abraham's posterity, besides the family of Jacob; and also in some of the posterity of Nahor, as we have instances of, in Job and his three friends, and Elihu. The land of Uz, where Job lived, was a land possessed by the posterity of Uz, or Huz, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, of whom we read, Gen. xxii. 21. Bildad the Shuhite was of the offspring of Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 1, 2; and Elihu the Buzite, was of Buz the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. So the true religion lasted among

some other people, besides the Israelites, a while after Abraham. But it did not last long; and it is probable that the time of their total rejection, and giving up to idolatry, was about the time when God separated the children of Israel from Egypt to serve him; for they are often put in mind on that occasion, that God had now separated them to be his peculiar people; or to be distinguished from all other people upon earth, to be his people alone: to be his portion, when others were rejected. This seems to hold forth thus much to us, that God now chose them in such a manner, that this visible choice of them was accompanied with a visible rejection of all other nations in the world, that God visibly came, and took up his residence with them, as forsaking all other nations.

And so, as the first calling of the Gentiles after Christ came, was accompanied with a rejection of the Jews; so the first calling of the Jews to be God's people, when they were called out of Egypt, was accompanied with a rejection of the Gentiles.

Thus all the Gentile nations throughout the whole world, all nations, but only the Israelites, and those that embodied themselves with them, were left and given up to idolatry; and so continued a great many ages, even from this time till Christ came, which was about fifteen hundred years. They were concluded so long a time in unbelief, that there might be a thorough proof of the necessity of a Saviour; that it might appear by so long a trial, past all contradiction, that mankind were utterly insufficient to deliver themselves from that gross darkness and misery, and subjection to the devil, that they had fallen under; that it might appear that all the wisdom of the philosophers, and the wisest men that the heathen had among them, could not deliver them from their darkness, for the greater glory to Jesus Christ, who, when he came, enlightened and delivered them by his glorious gospel. Herein the wonderful wisdom of God appeared, in thus preparing the way for Christ's redemption. This the Scripture teaches us, as in 1 Cor. i. 21: "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Here I might consider as another work of God, whereby the general work of redemption was carried on, that wonderful deliverance which he wrought for the children of Israel at the Red Sea, when they were pursued by the hosts of the Egyptians, and were just ready to be swallowed up by them, there being, to human appearance, no possibility of an escape. But as this may be referred to their redemption out of Egypt, and considered as a part of that more general work, I shall not further enlarge upon it.

III. The next thing that I shall take notice of here, that was done towards the work of redemption, is God's giving the moral law in so awful a manner at Mount Sinai. This was another new thing that God did, a new step taken in this great affair. Deut. iv. 33, "Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?" And it was a great thing that God did towards this work, and that whether we consider it as delivered as a new exhibition of the covenant of works, or given as a rule of life

The covenant of works was here exhibited to be as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ, not only for the use of that nation in the ages of the Old Testament, but for the use of God's church throughout all ages of the world; as an instrument that the great Redeemer makes use of to convince men of their sin and misery, and helpless state, and of God's awful and tremendous majesty and justice as a lawgiver, and so to make men sensible of the necessity of

Christ as a Saviour. The work of redemption, in its saving effect on men's souls, in all the progress of it to the end of it, is not carried on without the use of this law that was now delivered at Sinai.

It was given in an awful manner, with a terrible voice, exceedingly loud and awful, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled; and Moses himself, though so intimate a friend of God, yet said, I exceedingly fear and quake; the voice being accompanied with thunders and lightnings, the mountain burning with fire to the midst of heaven, and the earth itself shaking and trembling; to make all sensible how great that authority, power, and justice was, that stood engaged to exact the fulfilment of this law, and to see it fully executed; and how strictly God would require the fulfilment; and how terrible his wrath would be against every breaker of it; that men being sensible of these things, might have a thorough trial of themselves, and might prove their own hearts, and know how impossible it is for them to have salvation by the works of the law, and might see the absolute necessity they stood in of a mediator.

If we regard this law now given at Mount Sinai, not as the covenant of works, but as a rule of life; so it is made use of by the Redeemer, from that time to the end of the world, as a directory to his people, to show them the way in which they must walk as they would go to heaven: for a way of sincere and universal obedience to this law is the narrow way that leads to life.

IV. The next thing that is observable in this period, was God's giving the typical law, in which I suppose to be included most or all those precepts that were given by Moses, that did not properly belong to the moral law; not only those laws that are commonly called *ceremonial*, in distinction from judicial laws, which are the laws prescribing the ceremonies and circumstances of the Jewish worship, and their ecclesiastical state; but also many, if not all those divine laws that were political, and for regulating the Jewish commonwealth, commonly called *judicial* laws; these were at best many of them typical. The giving this typical law was another great thing that God did in this period, tending to build up this glorious structure of redemption that God had been carrying on from the beginning of the world. There had been many typical events of Providence before, that represented Christ and his redemption, and some typical ordinances, as particularly those two of sacrifices and circumcision: but now, instead of representing the great Redeemer in a few institutions, God gives forth a law full of nothing else but various and innumerable typical representations of good things to come, by which that nation were directed how, every year, month, and day, in their religious actions, and in their conduct of themselves, in all that appertained to their ecclesiastical and civil state, to show forth something of Christ; one observance showing one thing, exhibiting one doctrine, or one benefit; another, another; so that the whole nation by this law was, as it were, constituted in a typical state. Thus the gospel was abundantly held forth to that nation; so that there is scarce any doctrine of it, but is particularly taught and exhibited by some observance of this law; though it was in shadows, and under a vail, as Moses put a vail on his face when it shone.

To this typical law belong all the precepts that relate to building the tabernacle that was set up in the wilderness, and all the form, circumstances, and utensils of it.

V. About this time was given to God's church the first written word of God that ever was enjoyed by God's people. This was another great thing done towards the affair of redemption, a new and glorious advancement of the

building. Not far from this time, was the beginning of the great written rule, which God has given for the regulation of the faith, worship and practice of his church in all ages henceforward to the end of the world; which rule grew, and was added to from that time, for many ages, till it was finished, and the canon of Scripture completed by the Apostle John. It is not very material, whether the first written word that ever was, was the ten commandments, written on the tables of stone with the finger of God, or the book of Job; and whether the book of Job was written by Moses, as some suppose, or by Elihu, as others. If it was written by Elihu, it was written before this period that we are now upon; but yet could not be far from it, as appears by considering whose posterity the persons were that are spoken of in it, together with Job's great age, that was past before this was written.

The written word of God is the main instrument Christ has made use of to carry on his work of redemption in all ages since it was given. There was a necessity now of the word of God's being committed to writing, for a steady rule to God's church. Before this, the church had the word of God by tradition, either by immediate tradition from eminent men that were inspired, that were then living (for it was a common thing in those days, before there was a written word, for God to reveal himself immediately to eminent persons, as appears by the book of Job, and many other things that might be mentioned, in the book of Genesis), or else they had it by tradition from former generations, which might be had with tolerable certainty in ages preceding this, by reason of the long lives of men. Noah might converse with Adam, and receive traditions from him; and Noah lived till about Abraham's time: and the sons of Jacob lived a considerable time to deliver the revelations made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their posterity in Egypt. But the distance from the beginning of things was become so great, and the lives of men become so short, being brought down to the present standard about Moses's time, and God having now separated a nation to be a peculiar people, partly for that end to be the keepers of the oracles of God; God saw it to be a needful and convenient time now to commit his word to writing, to remain henceforward for a steady rule throughout all ages. And therefore, besides the book of Job, Christ wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone, with his own finger; and after this the whole law, as containing the substance of the five books of Moses, was by God's special command committed to writing, which was called *the book of the law*, and was laid up in the tabernacle, to be kept there for the use of the church; as you may see, Deut. xxxi. 24, 25, 26.

VI. God was pleased now wonderfully to represent the progress of his redeemed church through the world to their eternal inheritance, by the journey of the children of Israel through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan. Here all the various steps of the redemption of the church by Christ were represented, from the beginning to its consummation in glory. The state they are redeemed from is represented by Egypt, and their bondage there, which they left. The purchase of their redemption was represented by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, which was offered up that night that God slew all the first-born of Egypt. The beginning of the application of the redemption of Christ's church in their conversion, was represented by Israel's going out of Egypt, and passing through the Red Sea in so extraordinary and miraculous a manner The travel of the church through this evil world, and the various changes through which the church passes, in the different stages of it, were represented by the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness. The manner of their being conducted by Christ, was represented by the Israelites being led by the

pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The manner of the church's being supported in their progress, and supplied from the beginning to the end of it, with spiritual food, and continual daily communications from God, was represented by God's supplying the children of Israel with bread, or *manna*, from heaven, and water out of the rock. The dangers that the saints must meet with in their course through the world, were represented by the fiery flying serpents which the children of Israel met with in the wilderness The conflicts the church has with her enemies, were represented by their battle with the Amalekites, and others they met with there. And so innumerable other things might be mentioned, wherein the things they met with were lively images of things which the church and saints meet with in all ages of the world. That these things are typical of things that pertain to the Christian church is manifest from 1 Cor. x. 11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Here the apostle is speaking of those very things which we have now mentioned, and he says expressly, that they happened unto them for *types;* so it is in the original.

VII. Another thing here must not be omitted, which was a great and remarkable dispensation of Providence, respecting the whole world of mankind, which was finished in this period; and that was the shortening the days of man's life, whereby it was brought down from being between nine hundred and a thousand years, to be but about seventy or eighty. The life of man began to be shortened immediately after the flood; it was brought down the first generation to six hundred years; and the next to between four and five hundred years; and so the life of man gradually grew shorter and shorter, till about the time of the great mortality that was in the congregation of Israel, after they had murmured at the report of the spies, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness, whereby all the men of war died; and then the life of man was reduced to its present standard, as Moses observes in that Psalm that he wrote on occasion of that mortality: Psal. xc. 10, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

This great dispensation of God tended to promote the grand design of the redemption of Christ. Man's life being cut so very short in this world, tended to prepare the way for poor, mortal, short lived men, the more joyfully to entertain the glad tidings of everlasting life in another world, that are brought to light by the gospel; and more readily to embrace a Saviour, that purchases and offers such a blessing. If men's lives were still commonly about nine hundred years, how much less would they have to move them to regard the proffers of a future life; how much greater temptation would they have to rest in the things of this world, they being of such long continuance, and to neglect any other life but this! This probably contributed greatly to the wickedness of the antediluvians. But now how much greater motives have men to seek redemption, and a better life than this, by the great Redeemer, since the life of man is not one twelfth part of what it used to be, and men now universally die at the age when men formerly used to be but as it were setting out in the world!

VIII. The same work was carried on in preserving that people, of whom Christ was to come, from totally perishing in the wilderness, by a constant miracle of forty years, continuance. I observed before many times, how God preserved those of whom the Redeemer was to proceed, in a very wonderful

manner, as he preserved Noah and his family from the flood; and as he preserved Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with their families, from the wicked inhabitants of Canaan; and as he preserved Jacob and his family from perishing by the famine, by Joseph in Egypt. But this preservation of the children of Israel for so long a time in the wilderness, was on some accounts more remarkable than any of them; for it was by a continual miracle of so long duration. There was, as may be fairly computed, at first two millions of souls in that congregation, that could not subsist any better without meat and drink than other men. But if this had been withheld, they must all have perished, every man, woman, and child, in less than one month's time, so that there would not have been one of them left. But yet this vast multitude subsisted for forty years together, in a dry, barren wilderness, without sowing or reaping, or tilling any land, having their bread daily rained down to them out of heaven, and being furnished with water to satisfy them all, out of a rock; and the same clothes with which they came out of Egypt, lasting without wearing out all that time. Never was any instance like this of a nation's being so upheld for so long a time together. Thus God upheld his church by a continual miracle, and kept alive that people in whom was the blessing, the promised seed, and great Redeemer of the world.

IX. God was pleased, in this time of the children of Israel's being in the wilderness, to give a further revelation of Christ the Redeemer in the predictions of him, than had been before. Here are three prophecies given at this time that I would take notice of. The first is that of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17, 18, 19: "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city." This is a plainer prophecy of Christ, especially with regard to his kingly office, than any that had been before. But we have another, that God gave by Moses, that is plainer still, especially with regard to his prophetical office, in Deut. xviii. 18, &c.: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him," &c. This is a plainer prophecy of Christ than any that had been before, in this respect, that all the prophecies that had been before of Christ, were in figurative, mystical language. The first prophecy was so—that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that "in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed," were also mystical; which prophecy is not so particular, because the expression, *thy seed*, is general, and not plainly limited to any particular person. The prophecy of Jacob in blessing Judah, Gen. xlix. 8, is in mystical language; and so is that of Balaam, which speaks of Christ under the figurative expression of a *star*. But this is a plain prophecy, without being veiled in any mystical language at all.

There are several things contained in this prophecy of Christ. Here is his mediatorial office in general, ver. 16. Here it is revealed how he should be a person to stand between them and God, that was so terrible a being, a being of such awful majesty, holiness, and justice, that they could not have intercourse with him immediately, without a mediator to stand between them: because, if they came to such a dreadful sin-revenging God immediately, they should die; God would prove a consuming fire to them. And then here

a particular revelation of Christ with respect to his prophetical office: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee," &c. And further, it is revealed what kind of a prophet he should be, a prophet like Moses, who was the head and leader of all the people, and who, under God, had been their redeemer, to bring them out of the house of bondage, was, as it were, their shepherd, by whom God led them through the Red Sea and wilderness, and was an intercessor for them with God, and was both a prophet and a king in the congregation; for Moses had the power of a king among them. It is said of him, Deut. xxxiii. 5, he was king in Jeshurun, and he was the prophet by whom God as it were built up his church, and delivered his instructions of worship. Thus Christ was to be a prophet like unto Moses; so that this is both the plainest and fullest prophecy of Christ that ever had been from the beginning of the world to this time.

The next prophecy that I shall take notice of, respects only the calling of the Gentiles, which should be after Christ's coming, of which God gave a very plain prophecy by Moses in the wilderness, Deut. xxxii. 21. Here is a very plain prophecy of the rejection of the Jews, and calling the Gentiles. They moved God to jealousy, by that which was not God, by casting him off, and taking other gods, that were no gods, in his room. So God declares that he will move them to jealousy in the like manner, by casting them off, and taking other people, that had not been his people, in their room. The Apostle Paul takes notice of this prophecy, as foretelling the calling of the Gentiles, in Romans x. 19, 20: "But I say, Did not Israel know? First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest to them that asked not after me."

Thus you see how the light of the gospel, which first began to dawn and glimmer immediately after the fall, gradually increases the nearer we come to Christ's time.

X. Another thing by which God carried on this work in this time, was a remarkable pouring out of his Spirit on the young generation in the wilderness. The generation that was grown up when they came out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, was a very froward and perverse generation. They were tainted with the idolatry and wickedness of Egypt, and were not weaned from it, as the Prophet Ezekiel takes notice, Ezek. xx. 6, 7, 8. Hence they made the golden calf in imitation of the idolatry of Egypt, that was wont to worship a bull or an ox; and therefore cattle are called *the abomination of the Egyptians*, i. e. their idol. This generation God was exceeding angry with, and swore in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest. But the younger generation were not so; the generation that were under twenty years old when they came out of Egypt, and those that were born in the wilderness, the generation spoken of, Numb. xiv. 31: "But your little ones, whom ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in; and they shall know the land that ye have despised." This was the generation with whom the covenant was renewed, as we have an account in Deuteronomy, and that entered into the land of Canaan. This generation God was pleased to make a generation to his praise, and they were eminent for piety; as appears by many things said in Scripture about them; as, particularly, Jer. ii. 2, 3: "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase"

Here the generation that went after God in the wilderness, is spoken of with very high commendations, as eminent for holiness; "Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase." And their love to God is spoken of as distinguished, like the love of a bride at her espousals. The going after God in the wilderness that is here spoken of, is not the going of the children of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai, but their following God through that dreadful wilderness, that the congregation long wandered in, after they went back from Kadesh Barnea, which is spoken of Deut. viii. 15 "Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water." Though this generation had a much greater trial than the generation of their fathers had before they came to Kadesh Barnea, yet they never murmured against God in any wise, as their fathers had done: but their trials had a contrary effect upon them, to awaken them, convince, and humble them, and fit them for great mercy. They were awakened by those awful judgments of God that he inflicted on their fathers, whereby their carcasses fell in the wilderness. And God poured out his Spirit with those awakening providences towards their fathers, and their own travel in the wilderness, and the word preached to them by Moses; whereby they were greatly awakened, and made to see the badness of their own hearts, and were humbled, and at length multitudes of them savingly converted, as Deut. viii. 2, 3: "And thou shalt remember the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee," &c. And verse 15, "Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness,—that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end." And therefore it is said, Hos. xiii. 5, "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." God allured them, and brought them into that wilderness, and spake comfortably to them, as it was foretold that he would do afterwards, Hos. ii. 14.

Those terrible judgments that were executed in the congregation after their turning back from Kadesh Barnea, in the matter of Korah, and the matter of Peor, were chiefly on the old generation, whom God consumed in the wilderness. Those rebellions were chiefly among the elders of the congregation, who were of the older generation that God had given up to their hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels, and God was grieved with their manners forty years in the wilderness.

But that this younger congregation were eminent for piety, appears by all their history. The former generation were wicked, and were followed with curses; but this was holy, and wonderful blessings followed them. God did great things for them; he fought for them, and gave them the possession of Canaan. And it is God's manner, when he hath very great mercies to bestow on a visible people, first, to fit them for them, and then to bestow them on them. So it was here: they believed in God, and by faith overcame Sihon and Og, and the giants of Canaan; and are commended for cleaving to the Lord, Josh. xxiii. 8: Joshua says unto them, "Cleave unto the Lord, as ye have done unto this day." And so Israel did all the while that generation lived. But when Joshua and all that generation were dead, there arose another generation that knew not the Lord. This pious generation showed a laudable and fervent zeal for God on several occasions; on occasion of Achan's sin; but especially when they suspected the two tribes and a half had set up an altar in opposition to the altar of burnt-offering There never was any

generation of Israel that so much good and so little evil is mentioned of, as this generation. It is further observable, that in the time of this generation was the second general circumcision, whereby the reproach of Israel was fully rolled away, and they became pure; and when afterwards they were polluted by Achan, they purged themselves again.

The men of the former generation being dead, and God having sanctified this younger generation to himself, he solemnly renewed his covenant with them, as we have a particular account in the 29th chapter of Deuteronomy. We find that such solemn renovations of the covenant commonly accompanied any remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, causing a general reformation: so we find it was in Hezekiah's and Josiah's times. It is questionable whether there ever was a time of so great a flourishing of religion in the Israelitish church, as in that generation; and as, in the Christian church, religion was in its most flourishing circumstances in the day of its espousals, or first setting up of that church, in the days of the apostles, so it seems to have been with the Jewish church in the days of its first establishment in Moses's and Joshua's times

Thus God at this time did gloriously advance the work of redemption, both by his word and Spirit. By this pouring out of the Spirit of God, the work of redemption was promoted, not only as it was in itself a glorious instance of the carrying on of that redemption in the application of it, but as this was what God made use of as a means of the good and orderly establishment of the church of Israel at its first beginning, when it was first settled in the regular observance of God's ordinances in Canaan; even as the pouring out of the Spirit, in the beginning of the Christian church, was a great means God made use of for the well establishing the Christian church in the world in all succeeding ages.

XI. The next thing I would observe, was God's bringing the people of Israel under the hand of Joshua, and settling them in that land where Christ was to be born, and which was the great type of the heavenly Canaan, which Christ has purchased. This was done by Joshua, who was of Joseph's posterity, and was an eminent type of Christ, and is therefore called the shepherd, the stone of Israel, in Jacob's blessing of Joseph, Gen. xlix. 24. Being such a type of Christ, he bore the name of Christ. *Joshua* and *Jesus* are the same name, only the one is Hebrew, and the other is Greek: and therefore, in the New Testament, which was originally written in Greek, Joshua is called Jesus, Acts vii. 45, "Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus," i. e. Joshua: Heb. iv. 8, "If Jesus had given them rest, he would not have spoken of another day;" i. e., if Joshua had given them rest.

God wonderfully possessed his people of this land, conquering the former inhabitants of it, and the mighty giants, as Christ conquered the devil; first conquering the great kings of that part of the land, that was on the eastern side of Jordan, Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan; and then dividing the river Jordan, as before he had done the Red Sea; causing the walls of Jericho to fall down at the sound of the trumpets of the priests; that sound typifying the sound of the gospel by the preaching of gospel ministers, the walls of the accursed city Jericho signifying the walls of Satan's kingdom; and after this wonderfully destroying the mighty host of the Amorites under the five kings, causing the sun and moon to stand still, to help the people against their enemies, at the prayer of the typical Jesus; plainly holding this forth, that God would make the whole course of nature to be subservient to the affair of redemption; so that every thing should yield to the purposes of that work, and give place to the welfare of God's redeemed people.

Thus did Christ show his great love to his elect, that he would make the course of nature, in the frame of the world that he had made, and that he governed, to give place to their happiness and prosperity; and showed that the sun and moon, and all things, visible and invisible, were theirs by his purchase. At the same time, Christ fought as the captain of their host, and cast down great hailstones upon their enemies, by which more were slain than by the sword of the children of Israel. And after this Christ gave the people a mighty victory over a yet greater army in the northern part of the land, that were gathered together at the waters of Merom as the sand of the sea-shore, as it is said Josh. xi. 4.

Thus God gave the people whence Christ was to proceed, the land where he was to be born, and live, and preach, and work miracles, and die, and rise again, and whence he was to ascend into heaven, as the land which was a great type of heaven; which is another thing whereby a great advance was made in the affair of redemption.

XII. Another thing that God did towards carrying on this affair, was his actually setting up his stated worship among the people, as it had been before instituted in the wilderness. This worship was appointed at Mount Sinai, wholly in subserviency to this great affair of redemption. It was to make way for the coming of Christ; and the innumerable ceremonial observances of it were typical of him and his redemption. This worship was chiefly instituted at Mount Sinai; but it was gradually set up in practice. It was partly set up in the wilderness, where the tabernacle and its vessels were made; but there were many parts of their instituted worship that could not be observed in the wilderness, by reason of their unsettled, itinerant state there. And then there were many precepts that respect the land of Canaan, and their cities and places of habitation there; which therefore could not be put in practice, till they came into that land. But now, when this was brought to pass, God set up his tabernacle in the midst of his people, as he had before promised them, Lev. xxvi. 11: "I will set my tabernacle amongst you." The tabernacle was set up at Shiloh, Josh. xviii. 1, and the priests and Levites had their offices appointed them, and the cities of refuge were appointed; and now the people were in a condition to observe their feasts of the first fruits, and their feasts of ingathering, and to bring all their tithes and appointed offerings to the Lord; and most parts of God's worship were set up, though there were some things that were not observed till afterwards.

XIII. The next thing I would take notice of, was God's wonderfully preserving that people, from this time forward, when all the males went up, three times in the year, to the place where God's ark was. The people of Israel were generally surrounded with enemies, that sought all opportunities to destroy them, and dispossess them of their land; and till David's time there were great numbers in the land of the remains of the Canaanites, and the other former inhabitants of the land, that were bitter enemies to the people of Israel; and these had from year to year, three times in the year, a fair opportunity of overrunning their country, and getting possession of their cities, when all the males were gone, and only the women, and those who were not able to go up, were left behind. And yet they were remarkably preserved throughout all generations at such seasons, agreeably to the promise that God had made, Exod. xxxiv. 24: "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." So wonderfully did God order affairs, and influence the hearts of their enemies, that though they were so full of enmity against Israel, and desired to dispossess them of

their land, and had so fair an opportunity so often in their hands, that the whole country was left naked and empty of all that could resist them, and it would have been only for them to have gone and taken possession, and they could have had it without opposition, and they were so eager to take other opportunities against them; yet we never read, in all their history, of any of their enemies taking these opportunities against them; which could be no less than a continual miracle, that God, for the preservation of his church, kept up for so many generations, even throughout the ages of the Old Testament. It was surely a wonderful dispensation of divine Providence to maintain and promote God's great design of redemption.

XIV. God's preserving his church and the true religion from being wholly extinct in the frequent apostasies of the Israelites in the time of the judges. How prone was that people to forsake the true God, that had done such wonderful things for them, and to fall into idolatry! And how did the land, from time to time, seem to be almost overrun with idolatry! But yet God never suffered his true worship to be totally rooted out: his tabernacle stood, the ark was preserved, the book of the law was kept from being destroyed, God's priesthood was upheld, and God still had a church among the people; and time after time, when religion seemed to be almost gone, and it was come to the last extremity, then God granted a revival, and sent some angel or prophet, or raised up some eminent person, to be an instrument of their reformation.

XV. God's preserving that nation from being destroyed, and delivering them from time to time, although they were so often subdued and brought under the dominion of their enemies. It is a wonder, not only that the true religion was not wholly rooted out, and so the church destroyed that way; but also that the very nation in which that church was, was not utterly destroyed; they were so often brought under the power of their enemies. One while they were subdued by Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia, another while they were brought under the Moabites; and then they *were sold into the hand* of Jabin king of Canaan; and then they were under the dominion of the Midianites; and then were sorely distressed by the children of Ammon; and then by the Philistines. But yet God, in all these dangers, preserved them, and kept them from being wholly overthrown: and from time to time, when it was come to extremity, and God saw that they were upon the very brink of ruin, then God raised up a deliverer, agreeably to Deut. xxxii. 36: "For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants; when he seeth their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left."

Those remarkable dispensations of Providence are very lively and elegantly set forth by the Psalmist, Psal. cvi. 34, &c.

These deliverers that God raised up from time to time were all types of Christ, the great redeemer and deliverer of his church; and some of them very remarkably so; as, particularly, Barak, Jephthah, Gideon, and Samson, in very many particulars; and above all in the acts of Samson, as might be shown, were it not that this would take up too much time.

XVI. It is observable, that when Christ appeared to manage the affairs of his church in this period, he often appeared in the form of that nature that he took upon him in his incarnation. So he seems to have appeared to Moses from time to time, and particularly at that time when God spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, and he beheld the similitude of the Lord (Numb. xii. 8) after he had besought him to show him his glory; which was the most remarkable vision that ever he had of Christ. There was a twofold discovery that Moses had of Christ: one was spiritual, made to his

mind by the word that was proclaimed, when he proclaimed his name, saying, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation," Exod. xxxiv. 6, &c. Another was external; which was that which Moses saw, when Christ passed by, and put him in a cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand, so that Moses saw his back parts. What he saw was doubtless the back parts of a glorious human form, in which Christ appeared to him, and in all likelihood the form of his glorified human nature, in which he should afterwards appear. He saw not his face; for it is not to be supposed that any man could subsist under a sight of the glory of Christ's human nature as it now appears.

So it was a human form in which Christ appeared to the seventy elders, of which we have an account, Exod. xxiv. 9, 10, 11: "Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet, as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." So Christ appeared afterwards to Joshua in the form of the human nature, Josh. v. 13, 14: "And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood *a man* over against him with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." And so he appeared to Gideon, Judg. vi. 11, &c., and so also to Manoah, Judg. xiii 17—21. Here Christ appeared to Manoah in a representation both of his incarnation, and death; of his incarnation, in that he appeared in a human form; and of his death and sufferings, represented by the sacrifice of a kid, and by his ascending up in the flame of the sacrifice; intimating, that it was he that was the great sacrifice, thut must be offered up to God for a sweet savor, in the fire of his wrath, as that kid was burned and ascended up in the flame. Christ thus appeared time after time, in the form of that nature he was afterwards to take upon him; because he now appeared on the same design, and to carry on the same work, that he was to appear in that nature to work out and carry on.

XVII. Another thing I would mention, done in this period towards the work of redemption, is the beginning of a succession of prophets, and erecting a school of the prophets, in Samuel's time. There was something of this spirit of prophecy in Israel after Moses, before Samuel. Joshua, and many of the judges had a degree of it. Deborah was a prophetess; and some of the high priests were inspired with this spirit; particularly Eli: and that space of time was not wholly without instances of those that were set apart of God especially to this office, and so were called prophets. Such a one we read of, Judg. vi. 8: "The Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them," &c. Such a one he seems to have been that we read of, 1 Sam. ii. 27: "And there came a man of God to Eli," &c.

But there was no such order of men upheld in Israel for any constancy, before Samuel; the want of it is taken notice of in 1 Sam. iii. 1: "And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." But in Samuel there was begun a succession of prophets, that was maintained continually from that time, at least with very little interruption, till the spirit of

prophecy ceased, about Malachi's time: and therefore Samuel is spoken of in the New Testament as the beginning of this succession of prophets, Acts iii 24: "And all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days." After Samuel was Nathan, and Gad, and Iddo, and Heman, and Asaph, and others. And afterwards in the latter end of Solomon's reign, we read of Ahijah; and in Jeroboam's and Rehoboam's time we read of prophets; and so continually one prophet succeeded another, till the captivity. We read in the writings of those prophets that are inserted into the canon of the Scriptures, of prophets as being a constant order of men upheld in the land in those days: and in the time of the captivity there were prophets still, as Ezekiel and Daniel; and after the captivity there were prophets, as Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi.

And because God intended a constant succession of prophets from Samuel's time, therefore in his time was begun a school of the prophets; that is, a school of young men that were trained up under some great prophet, who was their master and teacher in the study of divine things, and the practice of holiness, to fit them for this office as God should call them to it. Those young men that belonged to these schools, were called *the sons of the prophets;* and oftentimes they are called *prophets.* These at first were under the tuition of Samuel. Thus we read of Samuel's being appointed over them, 1 Sam. xix. 20: "And when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them." The company of prophets that we read of 1 Sam. x. 5, were the same. Afterwards we read of their being under Elijah. Elisha was one of his sons; but he desired to have a double portion of his spirit, as his successor, as his first-born, as the eldest son was wont to have a double portion of the estate of his father; and therefore the sons of the prophets, when they perceived that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, submitted themselves to him, and owned him for their master, as they had done Elijah before him; as you may see, 2 Kings ii. 15: "And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they bowed themselves to the ground before him."

And so after this, Elisha was their master or teacher; he had the care and instruction of them; as you may see, 2 Kings iv. 38: "And Elisha came again to Gilgal, and there was a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets." In Elijah's and Elisha's time, there were several places where there resided companies of these sons of the prophets; as there was one at Bethel, and another at Jericho, and another at Gilgal, unless those at Gilgal and Jericho were the same: and possibly that which is called *the college,* where the prophetess Huldah resided, was another at Jerusalem; see 2 Kings xxii. 14. It is there said of Huldah the prophetess, that she "dwelt in Jerusalem, in the college." They had houses built, where they used to dwell together; and therefore those at Jericho being multiplied, and finding their house too little for them, desired leave of their master and teacher Elisha, that they might go and hew timber to build a bigger; as you may see, 2 Kings vi. 1, 2.

At some times there were numbers of these sons of the prophets in Israel; for when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, it is said, that Obadiah took a hundred of them, and hid them by fifty in a cave, 1 Kings xviii. 4.

These schools of the prophets being set up by Samuel, and afterwards kept up by such great prophets as Elijah and Elisha, must be of divine ap-

pointment; and accordingly we find, that those sons of the prophets were often favored with a degree of inspiration, while they continued under tuition in the schools of the prophets; and God, commonly, when he called any prophet to the constant exercise of the prophetical office, and to some extraordinary service, took them out of these schools; though not universally. Hence the prophet Amos, speaking of his being called to the prophetical office, says, that he was one that had not been educated in the schools of the prophets, and was not one of the sons of the prophets, Amos vii. 14, 15. But Amos's taking notice of it as remarkable, that he should be called to be a prophet that had not been educated at the schools of the prophets, shows that it was God's ordinary manner to take his prophets out of these schools; for therein he did but bless his own institution.

Now this remarkable dispensation of Providence that we are upon, viz., God's beginning a constant succession of prophets in Samuel's time, that was to last for many ages, and to that end, establishing a school of the prophets under Samuel, thenceforward to be continued in Israel, was a step that God took in that great affair of redemption that we are upon. For the main business of this succession of prophets was to foreshow Christ, and the glorious redemption that he was to accomplish, and so to prepare the way for his coming; as appears by that forementioned place, Acts iii. 24, and by Acts x. 43: "To him give all the prophets witness;" and by Acts iii. 18: "But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

As I observed before, the Old Testament time was like a time of night, wherein the church was not wholly without light, but had not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the stars. Now these prophets were the stars that reflected the light of the sun; and accordingly they spoke abundantly of Jesus Christ, as appears by what we have of their prophecies in writing. And they made it very much their business, when they studied in their schools or colleges, and elsewhere, to search out the work of redemption; agreeably to what the apostle Peter says of them, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ that was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." We are told that the church of the Redeemer is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, the Redeemer himself being the chief corner stone, Eph. ii. 20.

This was the first thing of the nature that ever was done in the world; and it was a great thing that God did towards further advancing this great building of redemption. There had been before occasional prophecies of Christ, as was shown; but now the time drawing nearer when the Redeemer should come, it pleased God to appoint a certain order of men, in constant succession, whose main business it should be to foreshow Christ and his redemption, and as his forerunners to prepare the way for his coming; and God established schools, wherein multitudes were instructed and trained up to that end: Rev. xix. 10, "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

PART V.

From David to the Babylonish Captivity.

I COME now to the *fifth period* of the times of the Old Testament, beginning with *David*, and extending to the *Babylonish captivity;* and would now proceed to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this period also.—And here,

I. The first thing to be taken notice of, is God's anointing that person that was to be the ancestor of Christ, to be king over his people. The dispensations of Providence that have been taken notice of through the last period, from Moses to this time, respect the people whence Christ was to proceed. But now the Scripture history leads us to consider God's providence towards that particular person whence Christ was to proceed, viz., David. It pleased God, at this time, remarkably to select out that person of whom Christ was to come, from all the thousands of Israel, and to put a most honorable mark of distinction upon him, by anointing him to be king over his people. It was only God that could find him out. His father's house is spoken of as being little in Israel, and he was the youngest of all the sons of his father, and was least expected to be the man that God had chosen, by Samuel. God had before, in the former ages of the world, remarkably distinguished the persons from whom Christ was to come; as he did Seth, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. But the last that we have any account of God's marking out in any notable manner, the very person of whom Christ was to come, was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah; unless we reckon Nahshon's advancement in the wilderness to be the head of the tribe of Judah. But this distinction of the person of whom Christ was to come, in David, was very honorable; for it was God's anointing him to be king over his people. And there was something further denoted by David's anointing, than was in the anointing of Saul. God anointed Saul to be king personally; but God intended something further, by sending Samuel to anoint David, viz., to establish the crown of Israel in him and in his family, as long as Israel continued to be a kingdom; and not only so, but what was infinitely more still, establishing the crown of his universal church, his spiritual Israel, in his seed, to the end of the world, and throughout all eternity.

This was a great dispensation of God, and a great step taken towards a further advancing of the work of redemption, according as the time drew near wherein Christ was to come. David, as he was the ancestor of Christ, so he was the greatest personal type of Christ of all under the Old Testament. The types of Christ were of three sorts; types of institution or instituted types, and providential, and personal types. The ordinance of sacrificing was the greatest of the instituted types; and the redemption out of Egypt was the greatest of the providential types; and David the greatest of the personal types. Hence Christ is often called David in the prophecies of Scripture; as Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David;—My servant David a prince among them;" and so in many other places: and he is very often spoken of as the seed of David, and the son of David.

David being the ancestor and great type of Christ, his being solemnly anointed by God to be king over his people, that the kingdom of his church might be continued in his family forever, may in some respects be looked on as an anointing of Christ himself. Christ was as it were anointed in him; and

therefore Christ's anointing and David's anointing are spoken of under one in Scripture, as Psal. lxxxix. 20, "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." And David's throne and Christ's are spoken of as one: Luke i. 32, "And the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David." Acts ii. 30, "David—knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."

Thus God's beginning of the kingdom of his church in the house of David, was, as it were, a new establishing of the kingdom of Christ; the beginning of it in a state of such visibility as it thenceforward continued in. It was as it were God's planting the root, whence that branch of righteousness was afterwards to spring up, that was to be the everlasting king of his church; and therefore this everlasting king is called *the branch from the stem of Jesse*, Isa. xi. 1: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jer. xxiii. 5, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper." So chap. xxxiii. 15, "In those days and at that time, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." So Christ, in the New Testament, is called *the root and offspring of David*, Rev. xxii. 16.

It is observable, that God anointed David after Saul to reign in his room. He took away the crown from him and his family, who was higher in stature than any of his people, and was in their eyes fittest to bear rule, to give it to David, who was low of stature, and in comparison, of despicable appearance. So God was pleased to show how Christ, who appeared despicable, without form or comeliness, and was despised and rejected of men, should take the kingdom from the great ones of the earth. And also it is observable, that David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, as Jacob the younger brother supplanted Esau, and got the birthright and blessing from him; and as Pharez, another of Christ's ancestors, supplanted Zarah in the birth; and as Isaac, another of the ancestors of Christ, cast out his elder brother Ishmael; thus was that frequent saying of Christ fulfilled, "The last shall be first, and the first last."

II. The next thing I would observe, is God's so preserving David's life, by a series of wonderful providences, till Saul's death. I before took notice of the wonderful preservation of other particular persons that were the ancestors of Christ; as Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and have observed how, in that Christ the great Redeemer was to proceed from them, that in their preservation the work of redemption itself may be looked upon as preserved from being defeated, and the whole church, which is redeemed through him, from being overthrown. But the preservation of David was no less remarkable than that of any others that have been already taken notice of. How often was it so, that there was but a step between him and death. The first instance of it we have in his encountering a lion and a bear, when they had caught a lamb out of his flock, which, without miraculous assistance, could at once have rent this young stripling in pieces, as they could the lamb that he delivered from them; so afterwards the root and offspring of David was preserved from the roaring lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour, and conquered him, and rescued the poor souls of men, that were as lambs in the mouth of this lion. Another remarkable instance was, in preserving him from that mighty giant Goliath, who was strong enough to have taken him, and picked him to pieces with his fingers, and given his flesh to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of the air, as he threatened him: but God preserved him from him, and gave

him the victory over him, so that he cut off his head with his own sword, and made him therein the deliverer of his people; as Christ slew the spiritual Goliath with his own weapon, the cross, and so delivered his people. And how remarkably did God preserve him from being slain by Saul, when he first sought his life, by giving him his daughter to be a snare to him, that the hand of the Philistines might be upon him, requiring him to pay for her by a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that so his life might be exposed to them; and in preserving him afterwards, when Saul spake to Jonathan, and to all his servants, to kill David; and in inclining Jonathan, instead of killing him, as his father bade him, to love him as his own soul, and to be a great instrument of his preservation, even so as to expose his own life to preserve David; though one would have thought that none would have been more willing to have David killed than Jonathan, seeing that he was competitor with him for his father's crown; and again saving him, when Saul threw a javelin at him to smite him even to the wall; and again preserving him when he sent messengers to his house, to watch him, and to kill him, when Michal, Saul's daughter, let him down through a window; and when he afterwards sent messengers, once and again, to Naioth in Ramah, to take him, and they were remarkably prevented time after time, by being seized with miraculous impressions of the Spirit of God; and afterwards, when Saul, being resolute in the affair, went himself, he also was among the prophets. And after this, how wonderfully was David's life preserved at Gath among the Philistines, when he went to Achish the king of Gath, and was there in the hands of the Philistines, who, one would have thought, would have despatched him at once, he having so much provoked them by his exploits against them: and he was again wonderfully preserved at Keilah, when he had entered into a fenced town, where Saul thought he was sure of him. And how wonderfully was he preserved from Saul, when he pursued and hunted him in the mountains! How remarkably did God deliver him in the wilderness of Maon, when Saul and his army were compassing David about! How was he delivered in the cave of Engedi, when, instead of Saul's killing David, God delivered Saul into his hands in the cave, and he cut off his skirt, and might as easily have cut off his head; and afterwards delivering him in like manner in the wilderness of Ziph; and afterwards again preserving him in the land of the Philistines, though David had fought against the Philistines, and conquered them at Keilah, since he was last among them; which, one would think, would have been sufficient warning to them not to trust him, or let him escape a second time, if ever they had him in their hands again; but yet now, when they had a second opportunity, God wonderfully turned their hearts to him to befriend and protect him, instead of destroying him.

Thus was the precious seed that virtually contained the Redeemer and all the blessings of his redemption, wonderfully preserved, when hell and earth were conspired against it to destroy it. How often does David himself take notice of this with praise and admiration in the book of Psalms!

III. About this time, the written word of God, or the canon of Scripture, was added to by Samuel. I have before observed, how that the canon of the Scripture was begun, and the first written word of God, the first written rule of faith and manners that ever was, was given to the church about Moses's time: and many, and I know not but most divines, think it was added to by Joshua, and that he wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy, and most of the book of Joshua. Others think that Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were written by Samuel. However that was, this we have good evi-

dence of, that Samuel made an addition to the canon of Scripture; for Samuel is manifestly mentioned in the New Testament, as one of the prophets whose writings we have in the Scriptures, in that forementioned Acts. iii. 24: "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." By that expression, "as many as have spoken," cannot be meant, as many as have spoken by word of mouth; for never was any prophet but what did that: but the meaning must be, as many as have spoken by writing, so that what they have spoken has come down to us, that we may see what it is.

And the way that Samuel spoke of these times of Christ and the gospel, was by giving the history of those things that typified them, and pointed to them, particularly the things concerning David that he wrote. The Spirit of God moved him to commit those things to writing, chiefly for that reason, because they pointed to Christ, and the times of the gospel; and, as was said before, this was the main business of all that succession of prophets, that began in Samuel, to foreshow those times.

That Samuel added to the canon of the Scriptures, seems further to appear from 1 Chron. xxix. 29: "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer."

Whether the book of Joshua was written by Samuel or not, yet it is the general opinion of divines, that the books of Judges, and Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were penned by him. The book of Ruth was penned for that reason, because, though it seemed to treat of private affairs, yet the persons chiefly spoken of in that book were of the family whence David and Christ proceeded, and so pointed to what the apostle Peter observed of Samuel and the other prophets, in the 3d chapter of Acts. The thus adding to the canon of the Scriptures, the great and main instrument of the application of redemption, is to be looked upon as a further carrying on of that work, and an addition made to that great building.

IV. Another thing God did towards this work, at that time, was his inspiring David to show forth Christ and his redemption, in divine songs, which should be for the use of the church, in public worship, throughout all ages David was himself endued with the spirit of prophecy. He is called *a prophet*, Acts. ii. 29, 30: "Let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day: therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath," &c. So that herein he was a type of Christ, that he was both a prophet and a king. We have no certain account of the time when David was first endued with the spirit of prophecy; but it is manifest that it either was at the time that Samuel anointed him, or very soon after; for he appears soon after acted by this spirit in the affair of Gabith: and then great part of the psalms were penned in the time of his troubles, before he came to the crown; as might be made manifest by an induction of particulars.

The oil that was used in anointing David was a type of the Spirit of God; and the type and the antitype were given both together; as we are told, 1 Sam. xvi. 13: "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward:" and it is probable, that it now came upon him in its prophetical influences.

The way that this Spirit influenced him was, to inspire him to show forth Christ, and the glorious things of his redemption, in divine songs, sweetly expressing the breathings of a pious soul, full of admiration of the glorious things

of the Redeemer, inflamed with divine love, and lifted up with praise; and therefore he is called *the sweet psalmist of Israel*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. "Now these be the last words of David: David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel." The main subjects of these sweet songs were the glorious things of the gospel; as is evident by the interpretation that is often put upon them, and the use that is made of them in the New Testament; for there is no one book of the Old Testament that is so often quoted in the New, as the book of Psalms. Joyfully did this holy man sing of those great things of Christ's redemption, that had been the hope and expectation of God's church and people from the beginning of the church of God on earth; and joyfully did others follow him in it, as Asaph, Heman, Ethan, and others; for the book of Psalms was not all penned by David, though the greater part of it was. Hereby the canon of Scripture was further added to; and an excellent portion of divine writ was it that was added.

This was a great advancement that God made in this building; and the light of the gospel, which had been gradually growing from the fall, was exceedingly increased by it; for whereas before there was but here and there a prophecy given of Christ in a great many ages, now here Christ is spoken of by his ancestor David abundantly, in multitudes of songs, speaking of his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, his satisfaction, intercession; his prophetical, kingly, and priestly office; his glorious benefits in this life and that which is to come; his union with the church, and the blessedness of the church in him; the calling of the Gentiles, the future glory of the church near the end of the world, and Christ's coming to the final judgment. All these things, and many more, concerning Christ and his redemption, are abundantly spoken of in the book of Psalms

This was also a glorious advancement of the affair of redemption, as God hereby gave his church a book of divine songs for their use in that part of their public worship, viz., singing his praises throughout all ages to the end of the world It is manifest the book of Psalms was given of God for this end. It was used in the church of Israel by God's appointment: this is manifest by the title of many of the psalms, in which they are inscribed to the chief musician; i. e., to the man that was appointed to be the leader of divine songs in the temple, in the public worship of Israel. So David is called *the sweet psalmist of Israel*, because he penned psalms for the use of the church of Israel; and accordingly we have an account that they were actually made use of in the church of Israel for that end, even ages after David was dead; as 2 Chron. xxix. 30: "Moreover, Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer." And we find that the same are appointed in the New Testament to be made use of in the Christian church, in their worship: Eph. v. 19, 'Speaking to yourselves in *psalms*, hymns, and spiritual songs." Col. iii. 16, "Admonishing one another in *psalms*, hymns, and spiritual songs." And so they have been, and will to the end of the world, be made use of in the church to celebrate the praises of God. The people of God were wont sometimes to worship God by singing songs to his praise before; as they did at the Red Sea; and they had Moses's prophetical song, in the 32d chapter of Deuteronomy, committed to them for that end; and Deborah, and Barak, and Hannah, sung praises to God; but now first did God commit to his church a book of divine songs for their constant use.

V The next thing I would take notice of, is God's actually exalting David

to the throne of Israel, notwithstanding all the opposition made to it. God was determined to do it, and he made every thing give place that stood in the way of it. He removed Saul and his sons out of the way; and first set David over the tribe of Judah; and then, having removed Ishbosheth, set him over all Israel. Thus did God fulfil his word to David. He took him from the sheepcote, and made him king over his people Israel, Psal. lxxviii. 70, 71 And now the throne of Israel was established in that family, in which it was to continue for ever, even for ever and ever.

VI. Now first it was that God proceeded to choose a particular city out of all the tribes of Israel to place his name there There is several times mention made in the law of Moses of the children of Israel's bringing their oblations to the place which God should choose; as Deut. xii. 5, 6, 7, and so in many other places; but God had never proceeded to do it till now. The tabernacle and ark were never fixed, but sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; but now God proceeded to choose Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem was never thoroughly conquered, or taken out of the hands of the Jebusites, till David's time. It is said in Joshua xv. 63, "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day." But now David wholly subdued it, as we have an account in 2 Sam. v. And now God proceeded to choose that city to place his name there, as appears by David's bringing up the ark thither soon after; and therefore this is mentioned afterwards as the first time God proceeded to choose a city to place his name there, 2 Chron. vi. 5, 6, and chap. xii. 13. Afterwards God proceeded to show David the very place where he would have his temple built, viz., in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

The city of Jerusalem is therefore called the *holy city;* and it was the greatest type of the church of Christ in all the Old Testament. It was redeemed by David, the captain of the hosts of Israel, out of the hands of the Jebusites, to be God's city, the holy place of his rest for ever, where he would dwell; as Christ, the captain of his people's salvation redeems his church out of the hands of devils, to be his holy and beloved city. And therefore how often does the Scripture, when speaking of Christ's redemption of his church, call it by the names of *Zion* and *Jerusalem!* This was the city that God had appointed to be the place of the first gathering and erecting of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, of that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God on the apostles and primitive Christians, and the place whence the gospel was to sound forth into all the world; the place of the first Christian church, that was to be, as it were, the mother of all other churches through the world; agreeably to that prophecy, Isa. ii. 3, 4: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people." &c.

Thus God chose Mount Sion, whence the gospel was to be sounded forth, as the law had been from Mount Sinai.

VII The next thing to be observed here, is God's solemnly renewing the covenant of grace with David, and promising that the Messiah should be of his seed. We have an account of it in the 7th chapter of the second book of Samuel. It was done on occasion of the thoughts David entertained of building God a house. On this occasion God sends Nathan the prophet to him with the glorious promises of the covenant of grace. It is especially contained in these words in the 16th verse: "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever"

Which promise has respect to Christ, the seed of David, and is fulfilled in him only: for the kingdom of David has long since ceased, any otherwise than as it is upheld in Christ. The temporal kingdom of the house of David has now ceased for a great many ages; much longer than ever it stood.

That this covenant that God now established with David by Nathan the prophet, was the covenant of grace, is evident by the plain testimony of Scripture, in Isa. lv. 1, 2, 3. There we have Christ inviting sinners to come to the waters, &c. And in the 3d verse he says, "Incline your ear, come unto me; hear, and your souls shall live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David." Here Christ offers to poor sinners, if they will come to him, to give them an interest in the same everlasting covenant that he had made with David, conveying to them the same sure mercies. But what is that covenant that sinners obtain an interest in, when they come to Christ, but the covenant of grace?

This was the fifth solemn establishment of the covenant of grace with the church after the fall. The covenant of grace was revealed and established all along. But there had been particular seasons, wherein God had in a very solemn manner renewed this covenant with his church, giving forth a new edition and establishment of it, revealing it in a new manner. This was now the fifth solemn establishment of that covenant. The first was with Adam, the second was with Noah, the third was with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fourth was in the wilderness by Moses, and now the fifth is this made to David.

This establishment of the covenant of grace with David, David always esteemed the greatest smile of God upon him, the greatest honor of all that God had put upon him; he prized it, and rejoiced in it above all the other blessings of his reign. You may see how joyfully and thankfully he received it, when Nathan came to him with the glorious message, in 2 Sam. vii. 18, &c. And so David, in his last words, declares this to be all his salvation, and all his desire; as you may see, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5: "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire."

VIII. It was by David that God first gave his people Israel the possession of the whole promised land. I have before shown, how God's giving the possession of the promised land belonged to the covenant of grace. This was done in a great measure by Joshua, but not fully. Joshua did not wholly subdue that part of the promised land that was strictly called the land of Canaan, and that was divided by lot to the several tribes; but there were great numbers of the old inhabitants left unsubdued, as we read in the books of Joshua and Judges; and there were many left to prove Israel, and to be thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes. There were the Jebusites in Jerusalem, and many of the Canaanites, and the whole nation of the Philistines, who all dwelt in that part of the land that was divided by lot, and chiefly in that part of the land that belonged to the tribes of Judah and Ephraim.

And thus these remains of the old inhabitants of Canaan continued unsubdued till David's time; but he wholly subdued them all. Which is agreeable to what St. Stephen observes, Acts vii. 45: "Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus (i. e. Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David." They were till the days of David in driving them out, before they had wholly subdued them But David entirely brought them under. He subdued the Jebusites, and he subdued the whole nation of the Philistines, and all the rest of the re-

mains of the seven nations of Canaan: 1 Chron. xviii. 1, "Now after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hands of the Philistines."

After this, all the remains of the former inhabitants of Canaan were made bond servants to the Israelites. The posterity of the Gibeonites became servants before, hewers of wood, and drawers of water, for the house of God. But Solomon, David's son and successor, put all the other remains of the seven nations of Canaan to bond service, at least made them pay a tribute of bond service, as you may see, 1 Kings ix. 20, 21, 22. And hence we read of the children of Solomon's servants, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, Ezra ii. 55, and Neh. xi. 3. They were the children or posterity of the seven nations of Canaan, that Solomon had subjected to bond service.

Thus David subdued the whole land of Canaan, strictly so called. But then that was not one half, nor quarter, of the land God had promised to their fathers. The land that God had often promised to their fathers, included all the countries from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. These were the bounds of the land promised to Abraham, Gen. xv. 18: "In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates." So again God promised at Mount Sinai, Exod. xxiii. 31: "And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee." So again, Deut. xi. 24: "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours; from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea, shall your coast be." Again, the same promise is made to Joshua, Josh. i. 3, 4: "Every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon, have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses; from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea, towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast." But the land that Joshua gave the people the possession of, was but a little part of this land. And the people never had had the possession of it, till now when God gave it them by David.

This large country did not only include that Canaan that was divided by lot to those who came in with Joshua, but the land of the Moabites and Ammonites, the land of the Amalekites, and the rest of the Edomites, and the country of Zobah. All these nations were subdued and brought under the children of Israel by David. And he put garrisons in the several countries, and they became David's servants, as we have a particular account in the 8th chapter of 2d Samuel; and David extended their border to the river Euphrates, as was promised; see the 3d verse: "And David smote also Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates." And accordingly we read, that Solomon his son reigned over all the region on this side the river, 1 Kings iv. 24: "For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river." This, Artaxerxes, king of Persia, takes notice of long after, Ezra iv. 20: "There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom was paid unto them."

So that Joshua, that type of Christ, did but begin the work of giving Israel the possession of the promised land; but left it to be finished by that much greater type and ancestor of Christ, even David, who subdued far more of that

land than even Joshua had done. And in this extent of his and Solomon's dominion was some resemblance of the great extent of Christ's kingdom; and therefore the extent of Christ's kingdom is set forth by this very thing, of its being over all lands, from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and over all lands from thence to the river Euphrates, as Psal. lxxii. 8: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." See also 1 Kings viii. 56.

IX. God by David perfected the Jewish worship, and added to it several new institutions. The law was given by Moses, but yet all the institutions of the Jewish worship were not given by Moses; some were added by divine direction. So this greatest of all personal types of Christ did not only perfect Joshua's work, in giving Israel the possession of the promised land, but he also finished Moses's work, in perfecting the instituted worship of Israel. Thus there must be a number of typical prophets, priests, and princes, to complete one figure or shadow of Christ, the antitype, he being the substance of all the types and shadows. Of so much more glory was Christ accounted worthy, than Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon, and all the great prophets, priests, princes, judges, and saviours of the Old Testament put together.

The ordinances of David are mentioned as of parallel validity with those of Moses, 2 Chron. xxiii. 18: "Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David." The worship of Israel was perfected by David, by the addition that he made to the ceremonial law, which we have an account of in the 23d, 24th, 25th, and 26th chapters of the first book of Chronicles, consisting in the several orders and courses into which David divided the Levites, and the work and business to which he appointed them, different from what Moses had appointed them to; and also in the divisions of the priests the sons of Aaron into four and twenty courses, assigning to every course their business in the house of the Lord, and their particular stated times of attendance there; and appointing some of the Levites to a new office, that had not been appointed before; and that was the office of singers, and particularly ordering and regulating of them in that office, as you may see in the 25th chapter of 1 Chronicles; and appointing others of the Levites by law to the several services of porters, treasurers, officers, and judges. And these ordinances of David were kept up henceforth in the church of Israel, as long as the Jewish church lasted. Thus we find the several orders of priests, and the Levites, the porters, and singers, after the captivity. So we find the courses of the priests appointed by David still continuing in the New Testament; so Zacharias the father of John the Baptist was a priest of the course of Abia; which is the same with the course of Abijah, appointed by David, that we read of, 1 Chron. xxiv. 10.

Thus David as well as Moses was made like to Christ the son of David, in this respect, that by him God gave a new ecclesiastical establishment, and new institutions of worship. David did not only add to the institutions of Moses, but by those additions he abolished some of the old institutions of Moses that had been in force till that time; particularly those laws of Moses that appointed the business of the Levites, which we have in the 3d and 4th chapters of Numbers, which very much consisted in their charge of the several parts and utensils of the tabernacle there assigned to them, and in carrying those several parts of the tabernacle. But those laws were now abolished by David; and they were no more to carry those things, as they had been used to do till David's time.

But David appointed them to other work instead of it; see 1 Chron. xxiii. 26: "And also unto the Levites, they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof." A sure evidence that the ceremonial law given by Moses is not perpetual, as the Jews suppose; but might be wholly abolished by Christ. For if David, a type of the Messiah, might abolish the law of Moses in part, much more might the Messiah himself abolish the whole.

David, by God's appointment, abolished all use of the tabernacle that was built by Moses, and of which he had the pattern from God. For God now revealed it to David to be his will, that a temple should be built, that should be instead of the tabernacle. A great presage of what Christ, the son of David, would do, when he should come, viz,, abolish the whole Jewish ecclesiastical constitution, which was but as a movable tabernacle to set up the spiritual gospel temple, which was to be far more glorious, and of greater extent, and was to last forever. David had the pattern of all things pertaining to the temple showed him, even in like manner as Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle. And Solomon built the temple according to that pattern which he had from his father David, which *he* received from God. 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things." And ver. 19: "All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."

X. The canon of Scripture seems at or after the close of David's reign to be added to by the prophets Nathan and Gad. It appears probable by the Scriptures, that they carried on the history of the two books of Samuel from the place where Samuel left it, and finished it. These two books of Samuel seem to be the book that in the Scripture is called the *book of Samuel the seer, and Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer*, as in 1 Chron. xxix. 29: "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer."

XI. The next thing I would take notice of, is God's wonderfully continuing the kingdom of his visible people in the line of Christ's legal ancestors, as long as they remained an independent kingdom. Thus it was without any interruption worth notice. Indeed the kingdom of all the tribes of Israel was not kept in that line; but the dominion of that part of Israel, in which the true worship of God was upheld, and so of that part that were God's visible people, was always kept in the family of David, as long as there was any such thing as an independent king of Israel; according to his promise to David: and not only in the family of David, but always in that part of David's posterity that was the line whence Christ was legally descended; so that the very person that was Christ's legal ancestor was always in the throne, excepting Jehoahaz, who reigned three months, and Zedekiah; as you may see in Matthew's genealogy of Christ.

Christ was legally descended from the kings of Judah, though he was not naturally descended from them. He was both legally and naturally descended from David. He was naturally descended from Nathan the son of David; for Mary his mother was one of the posterity of David by Nathan, as you may see in Luke's genealogy: but Joseph, the reputed and legal father of Christ, was

naturally descended of Solomon and his successors, as we have an account in Matthew's genealogy. Jesus Christ, though he was not the natural son of Joseph, yet, by the law and constitution of the Jews, he was Joseph's heir; because he was the lawful son of Joseph's lawful wife, conceived while she was his legally espoused wife. The Holy Ghost raised up seed to him. A person by the law of Moses, might be the legal son and heir of another, whose natural son he was not; as sometimes a man raised up seed to his brother; a brother, in some cases, was to build up a brother's house; so the Holy Ghost built up Joseph's house.

And Joseph being in the direct line of the kings of Judah, of the house of David, he was the legal heir of the crown of David: and Christ, being legally his first-born son, he was his heir; and so Christ, by the law, was the proper heir of the crown of David, and is therefore said to sit upon the throne of his father David.

The crown of God's people was wonderfully kept in the line of Christ's legal ancestors. When David was old, and not able any longer to manage the affairs of the kingdom, Adonijah, one of his sons, set up to be king, and seemed to have obtained his purpose; all things for a while seemed fair on his side, and he thought himself strong; the thing he aimed at seemed to be accomplished. But so it was, Adonijah was not the son of David that was the ancestor of Joseph, the legal father of Christ; and therefore, how wonderfully did Providence work here! What a strange and sudden revolution! All Adonijah's kingdom and glory vanished away as soon as it was begun; and Solomon, the legal ancestor of Christ, was established in the throne.

And after Solomon's death, when Jeroboam had conspired against the family, and Rehoboam carried himself so that it was a wonder all Israel was not provoked to forsake him, and ten tribes did actually forsake him, and set up Jeroboam in opposition to him; and though he was a wicked man, and deserved to have been rejected altogether from being king; yet he being the legal ancestor of Christ, God kept the kingdom of the two tribes, in which the true religion was upheld, in his possession: and though he had been wicked, and his son Abijam was another wicked prince; yet they being legal ancestors of Christ, God still continued the crown in the family, and gave it to Abijam's son Asa. And afterwards, though many of the kings of Judah were very wicked men, and horridly provoked God, as particularly Jehoram, Ahaziah, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon; yet God did not take away the crown from their family, but gave it to their sons, because they were the ancestors of Christ. God's remembering his covenant that he had established with David, is given as the reason why God did thus, notwithstanding their wicked lives, as 1 Kings xv. 4: speaking there of Abijam's wickedness, it is said, "Nevertheless, for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem:" so 2 Chron. xxi. 7; speaking there of Jehoram's great wickedness, it is said, "Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light unto him, and to his sons forever."

The crown of the ten tribes was changed from one family to another continually. First, Jeroboam took it; but the crown remained in his family but for one generation after his death; it only descended to his son Nadab: and then Baasha, that was of another family, took it; and it remained in his posterity but one generation after his death: and then Zimri, that was his servant, and not of his posterity, took it; and then, without descending at all to his posterity, Omri, that was of another family, took it; and the crown continued in

his family for three successions; and then Jehu, that was of another family, took it; and the crown continued in his family for three or four successions: and then Shallum, that was of another family, took it; and the crown did not descend at all to his posterity; but Menahem, that was of another family, took it; and it remained in his family but one generation after him: and then Pekah, that was of another family, took it; and after him Hoshea, that was still of another family, took it: so great a difference was there between the crown of Israel and the crown of Judah; the one was continued evermore in the same family, and with very little interruption, in one right line; the other was continually tossed about from one family to another, as if it were the sport of fortune. The reason was not, because the kings of Judah, many of them, were better than the kings of Israel; but the one had the blessing in them; they were the ancestors of Christ, whose right it was to sit on the throne of Israel. But with the kings of Israel it was not so; and therefore divine Providence exercised a continual care, through all the changes that happened through so many generations, and such a long space of time, to keep the crown of Judah in one direct line, in fulfilment of the everlasting covenant he had made with David, the mercies of which covenant were sure mercies; but in the other case there was no such covenant, and so no such care of Providence.

And here it must not be omitted, that there was once a very strong conspiracy of the kings of Syria and Israel, in the time of that wicked king of Judah, Ahaz, to dispossess Ahaz and his family of the throne of Judah, and to set one of another family, even the son of Tabeal, on it; as you may see in Isa. vii. 6: "Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal." And they seemed very likely to accomplish their purpose. There seemed to be so great a likelihood of it, that the hearts of the people sunk within them; they gave up the cause. It is said, "The heart of Ahaz and his people was moved, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind." And on this occasion God sent the prophet Isaiah to encourage the people, and tell them that it should not come to pass. And because it looked so much like a gone case, that Ahaz and the people would very difficultly believe that it would not be, therefore God directs the prophet to give them this sign of it, viz., that Christ should be born of the legal seed of Ahaz; as Isa. vii. 14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This was a good sign, and a great confirmation of the truth of what God promised by Isaiah, viz., that the kings of Syria and Israel should never accomplish their purpose of dispossessing the family of Ahaz of the crown of Judah, and setting up the son of Tabeal; for Christ the Immanuel was to be of them.

I have mentioned this dispensation of Providence in this place, because, though it was continued for so long a time, yet it began in Solomon's succession to the throne of his father David.

XII. The next thing I would take notice of, is the building of the temple: a great type of three things, viz., of Christ, especially the human nature of Christ; of the church of Christ; and of heaven. The tabernacle seemed rather to represent the church in its movable, changeable state, here in this world. But that beautiful, glorious, costly structure of the temple, that succeeded the tabernacle, and was a fixed, and not a movable thing, seems especially to represent the church in its glorified state in heaven. This temple was built according to the pattern shown by the Holy Ghost to David, and by divine direction given to David, in the place where was the threshing floor of Ornan

the Jesubite, in Mount Moriah, 2 Chron. iii. 1; in the same mountain, and doubtless in the very same place, where Abraham offered up his son Isaac; for that is said to be a mountain in the land of Moriah, Gen. xxii. 2, which mountain was called *the mountain of the Lord*, as this mountain of the temple was, Gen. xxii. 14: "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

This was the house where Christ dwelt, till he came to dwell in the temple of his body, or human nature, which was the antitype of his temple; as appears, because Christ, on occasion of showing him the temple of Jerusalem, says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days will I raise it up," speaking of the temple of his body, John ii. 19, 20. This house, or a house built in this place, continued to be the house of God, the place of the worship of his church, till Christ came. Here was the place that God chose, where all their sacrifices were offered up, till the great sacrifice came, and made the sacrifice and oblation to cease. Into his temple in this place the Lord came, even the messenger of the covenant. Here he often delivered his heavenly doctrine, and wrought miracles; here his church was gathered by the pouring out of the Spirit, after his ascension. Luke xxiv. 53, speaking of the disciples, after Christ's ascension, it is said, "And they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." And, Acts ii. 46, speaking of the multitudes that were converted by that great outpouring of the Spirit that was on the day of Pentecost, it is said, "And they continued daily with one accord in the temple." And, Acts v. 42, speaking of the apostles, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.' And hence the sound of the gospel went forth, and the church spread into all the world.

XIII It is here worthy to be observed, that at this time, in Solomon's reign, after the temple was finished, the Jewish church was risen to its highest external glory. The Jewish church, or the ordinances and constitution of it, is compared to the moon, in Rev. xii. 1: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." As this church was like the moon in many other respects, so it was in this, that it waxed and waned like the moon. From the first foundation of it, that was laid in the covenant made with Abraham, when this moon was now beginning to appear, it had to this time been gradually increasing in its glory. This time, wherein the temple was finished and dedicated, was about the middle, between the calling of Abraham and the coming of Christ, and now it was full moon. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually decreased, till Christ came; as I shall have occasion more particularly to observe afterwards.

Now the church of Israel was in its highest external glory. Now Israel was multiplied exceedingly, so that they seemed to have become like the sand on the sea-shore, 1 Kings iv. 20. Now the kingdom of Israel was firmly established in the right family, the family of which Christ was to come. Now God had chosen the city where he would place his name. Now God had fully given his people the possession of the promised land: and they now possessed the dominion of it all in quietness and peace, even from the river of Egypt, to the great river Euphrates; all those nations that had formerly been their enemies, quietly submitted to them; none pretended to rebel against them. Now the Jewish worship in all its ordinances was fully settled. Now, instead of a movable tent and tabernacle, they had a glorious temple; the most magnificent, beautiful, and costly structure, that there was then, ever had been, or ever has been since. Now the people enjoyed peace and plenty, and sat every man

under his vine and fig-tree, eating and drinking, and making merry, as 1 Kings iv. 20. Now they were in the highest pitch of earthly prosperity, silver being as plenty as stones, and the land full of gold and precious stones, and other precious foreign commodities, which were brought by Solomon's ships from Ophir, and which came from other parts of the world. Now they had a king reigning over them that was the wisest of men, and probably the greatest earthly prince that ever was. Now their fame went abroad into all the earth, so that they came from the utmost parts of the earth to see their glory and their happiness.

Thus God was pleased, in one of the ancestors of Christ, remarkably to shadow forth the kingdom of Christ, reigning in his glory. David, that was a man of war, a man who had shed much blood, and whose life was full of troubles and conflicts, was more of a representation of Christ in his state of humiliation, his militant state, wherein he was conflicting with his enemies. But Solomon, that was a man of peace, was a representation more especially of Christ exalted, triumphing, and reigning in his kingdom of peace. And the happy glorious state of the Jewish church at that time, did remarkably represent two things: 1. That glorious state of the church on earth that shall be in the latter ages of the world; those days of peace, when nation shall not lift sword against nation, nor learn war any more. 2. The future glorified state of the church in heaven. The earthly Canaan never was so lively a type of the heavenly Canaan, as it was then, when the happy people of Israel did indeed enjoy it as a land flowing with milk and honey.

XIV. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually declined more and more till Christ came; yet not so but that the work of redemption still went on. Whatever failed or declined, God still carried on this work from age to age; this building was still advancing higher and higher. Things still went on, during the decline of the Jewish church, towards a further preparation of things for the coming of Christ, as well as during its increase; for so wonderfully were things ordered by the infinitely wise governor of the world, that whatever happened was ordered for good to this general design, and made a means of promoting it. When the people of the Jews flourished, and were in prosperity, he made that to contribute to the promoting this design; and when they were in adversity, God made that also to contribute to the carrying on of the same design. While the Jewish church was in its increasing state, the work of redemption was carried on by their increase; and when they came to their declining state, which they were in from Solomon's time till Christ, God carried on the work of redemption by that. That decline itself was one thing that God made use of as a further preparation for Christ's coming.

As the moon, from the time of its full, is approaching nearer and nearer to her conjunction with the sun; so her light is still more and more decreasing, till at length, when the conjunction comes, it is wholly swallowed up in the light of the sun. So it was with the Jewish church from the time of its highest glory in Solomon's time. In the latter end of Solomon's reign, the state of things began to darken, by Solomon's corrupting himself with idolatry, which much obscured the glory of this mighty and wise prince; and withal troubles began to arise in his kingdom; and after his death the kingdom was divided, and ten tribes revolted, and withdrew their subjection from the house of David, withal falling away from the true worship of God in the temple at Jerusalem, and setting up the golden calves of Bethel and Dan. And presently after this the number of the ten tribes was greatly diminished in the battle of Jeroboam with Abijah, wherein there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand

chosen men; which loss the kingdom of Israel probably never in any measure recovered.

The ten tribes finally apostatized from the true God under Jeroboam, and the kingdom of Judah was greatly corrupted, and from that time forward were more generally in a corrupt state than otherwise. In Ahab's time the kingdom of Israel did not only worship the calves of Bethel and Dan, but the worship of Baal was introduced. Before, they pretended to worship the true God by these images, the calves of Jeroboam; but now Ahab introduced gross idolatry, and the direct worship of false gods in the room of the true God; and soon after the worship of Baal was introduced into the kingdom of Judah, viz., in Jehoram's reign, by his marrying Athaliah the daughter of Ahab. After this God began to cut Israel short, by finally destroying and sending into captivity that part of the land that was beyond Jordan, as you may see in 2 Kings x. 32, &c. And then after this Tiglath-pileser subdued and captivated all the northern parts of the land, 2 Kings xv. 29. And then at last all the land of the ten tribes was subdued by Salmaneser, and they were finally carried captive out of their own land. After this also the kingdom of Judah was carried captive into Babylon, and a great part of the nation never returned. Those that returned were but a small number, compared with what had been carried captive; and for the most part after this they were dependent on the power of other states, being subject one while to the king of Persia, then to the monarchy of the Grecians, and then to the Romans. And before Christ's time, the church of the Jews was become exceeding corrupt, overrun with superstition and self-righteousness. And how small a flock was the church of Christ in the days of his incarnation!

God, by this gradual decline of the Jewish state and church from Solomon's time, prepared the way for the coming of Christ several ways.

1. The decline of the glory of this legal dispensation made way for the introduction of the more glorious dispensation of the gospel The decline of the glory of the legal dispensation, was to make way for the introduction of the evangelical dispensation, that was so much more glorious, that the legal dispensation had no glory in comparison with it. The glory of the ancient dispensation, such as it was in Solomon's time, consisting so much in external glory, was but a childish glory, compared with the spiritual glory of the dispensation introduced by Christ. The church under the Old Testament, was a child under tutors and governors, and God dealt with it as a child. Those pompous externals are called by the apostle, *weak and beggarly elements.* It was fit that those things should be diminished as Christ approached; as John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, speaking of Christ, says, "He must increase, but I must decrease," John iii. 30. It is fit that the twinkling stars should gradually withdraw their glory, when the sun is approaching towards his rising. The glory of the Jewish dispensation must be gradually diminished, to prepare the way for the more joyful reception of the spiritual glory of the gospel. If the Jewish church, when Christ came, had been in the same external glory that it was in, in the reign of Solomon, men would have had their eyes so dazzled with it, that they would not have been likely joyfully to exchange such great external glory, for only the spiritual glory of the poor despised Jesus. Again,

2. This gradual decline of the glory of the Jewish state, tended to prepare the way for Christ's coming another way, viz., as it tended to make the glory of God's power, in the great effects of Christ's redemption, the more conspicuous. God's people being so diminished and weakened by one step after another, till Christ came, was very much like the diminishing Gideon's army. God told Gideon, that the people that were with him, were too many

for him to deliver the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel should vaunt themselves against him, saying, "My own hand hath saved me." And therefore all that were fearful were commanded to return; and there returned twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand. But still they were too many; and then, by trying the people at the water, they were reduced to three hundred men. So the people in Solomon's time were too many, and mighty, and glorious for Christ; therefore he diminished them; first, by sending off the ten tribes; and then he diminished them again by the captivity into Babylon; and then they were further diminished by the great and general corruption that there was when Christ came; so that Christ found very few godly persons among them: and with a small handful of disciples, Christ conquered the world. – Thus high things were brought down, that Christ might be exalted.

3. This prepared the way for Christ's coming, as it made the salvation of those Jews that were saved by Christ, to be more sensible and visible. Though the greater part of the nation of the Jews was rejected, and the Gentiles called in their room; yet there were a great many thousands of the Jews that were saved by Christ after his resurrection, Acts xxi. 20. They being taken from so low a state under temporal calamity in their bondage to the Romans, and from a state of great superstition and wickedness, that the Jewish nation was then fallen into; it made their redemption the more sensibly and visibly glorious.

I have taken notice of this dispensation of Providence in the gradual decline of the Jewish church in this place, because it began in the reign of Solomon.

XV. I would here take notice of the additions that were made to the canon of Scripture in or soon after the reign of Solomon. There were considerable additions made by Solomon himself, who wrote the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, probably near the close of his reign. His writing the Song of Songs, as it is called, is what is especially here to be taken notice of, which is wholly on the subject that we are upon, viz., Christ and his redemption, representing the high and glorious relation, and union, and love, that are between Christ and his redeemed church. And the history of the Scripture seems, in Solomon's reign, and some of the next succeeding reigns, to have been added to by the prophets Nathan and Ahijah, and Shemaiah and Iddo. It is probable that part of the history which we have in the first of Kings was written by them, by what is said 2 Chron. ix. 29, and in chap. xii. 15, and in chap. xiii. 22.

XVI. God's wonderfully upholding his church and the true religion through this period. It was very wonderful, considering the many and great apostasies that there were of that people to idolatry. When the ten tribes had generally and finally forsaken the true worship of God, God kept up the true religion in the kingdom of Judah; and when they corrupted themselves, as they very often did exceedingly, and idolatry was ready totally to swallow all up, yet God kept the lamp alive, and was often pleased, when things seemed to be come to an extremity, and religion at its last gasp, to grant blessed revivals by remarkable outpourings of his Spirit, particularly in Hezekiah's and Josiah's time.

XVII. God remarkably kept the book of the law from being lost in times of general and long continued neglect of, and enmity against it. The most remarkable instance of this kind that we have, was the preservation of the book of the law in the time of the great apostasy, during the greatest part of the long reign of Manasseh, which lasted fifty-five years, and then after that the reign of Amon his son. This while the book of the law was so much neglected, and such a careless and profane management of the affairs of the temple

prevailed, that the book of the law, that used to be laid up by the side of the ark in the Holy of Holies, was lost for a long time; nobody knew where it was. But yet God preserved it from being finally lost. In Josiah's time, when they came to repair the temple, it was found buried in rubbish, after it had been lost so long that Josiah himself seems to have been much a stranger to it till now. See 2 Kings xxii. 8, &c.

XVIII. God's remarkably preserving the tribe of which Christ was to proceed, from being ruined through the many and great dangers of this period. The visible church of Christ from Solomon's reign, was mainly in the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Benjamin, that was annexed to them, was but a very small tribe, and the tribe of Judah exceeding large; and as Judah took Benjamin under his covert when he went into Egypt to bring corn, so the tribe of Benjamin seemed to be under the covert of Judah ever after; and though, on occasion of Jeroboam's setting up the calves at Bethel and Dan, the Levites resorted to Judah out of all the tribes of Israel (2 Chron. xi. 13), yet they were also small, and not reckoned among the tribes: and though many of the ten tribes did also on that occasion, for the sake of the worship of God in the temple, leave their inheritances in their several tribes, and removed and settled in Judah, and so were incorporated with them, as we have an account in the chapter just quoted, and 16th verse; yet the tribe of Judah was so much the prevailing part, that they were called by one name, they were called *Judah:* therefore God said to Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 13, "I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen," and so ver. 32, 36. So when the ten tribes were carried captive, it is said, there was none left but the tribe of Judah only: 2 Kings xvii. 18, "Therefore the Lord was very wroth with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only." Whence they were all called *Jews*, which is a word that comes from Judah.

This was the tribe of which Christ was to come; and in this chiefly did God's visible church consist, from Solomon's time. And this was the people over whom the kings that were legal ancestors of Christ, and were of the house of David, reigned. This people was wonderfully preserved from destruction during this period, when they often seemed to be upon the brink of ruin, and just ready to be swallowed up. So it was in Rehoboam's time, when Shishak king of Egypt came against Judah with such a vast force; yet then God manifestly preserved them from being destroyed. Of this we read in the beginning of the 12th chapter of 2 Chronicles. So it was again in Abijah's time, when Jeroboam set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men; a mighty army indeed. We read of it, 2 Chron. xiii. 3: "Then God wrought deliverance to Judah, out of regard to the covenant of grace established with David," as is evident by verses 4 and 5; and the victory they obtained was because the Lord was on their side, as you may see, verse 12. So it was again in Asa's time, when Zerah the Ethiopian came against him with a yet larger army of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots, 2 Chron. xiv. 9. On this occasion Asa cried to the Lord, and trusted in him, being sensible that it was nothing with him to help those that had no power, ver. 11: "And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with those that have no power." And accordingly God gave them a glorious victory over this mighty host.

So again it was in Jehoshaphat's time, when the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir, combined together against Judah with a mighty army, a force vastly superior to any that Jehosha-

that could raise; and Jehoshaphat and his people were greatly afraid; yet they set themselves to seek God on this occasion, and trusted in him; and God told them by one of his prophets, that they need not fear them, nor should they have any occasion to fight in this battle, they should only stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. And according to his direction, they only stood still and sang praises to God, and God made their enemies do the work themselves, and set them to killing one another; and the children of Judah had nothing to do, but to gather the spoil, which was more than they could carry away. We have the story in 2 Chron. xx.

So it was again in Ahaz's time, when Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, conspired against Judah, and seemed to be sure of their purpose; of which we have spoken already. So it was again in Hezekiah's time, when Sennacherib, that great king of Assyria, and head of the greatest monarchy that was then in the world, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, after he had conquered most of the neighboring countries, and sent Rabshakeh, the captain of his host, against Jerusalem, who came, and in a very proud and scornful manner insulted Hezekiah and his people, as being sure of victory; and the people were trembling for fear, like lambs before a lion. Then God sent Isaiah the prophet to comfort them, and assure them that they should not prevail; as a token of which he gave them this sign, viz., that the earth, for two years successively, should bring forth food of itself, from the roots of the old stalks, without their ploughing or sowing; and then the third year they should sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, and live on the fruits of their labor, as they were wont to do before See 2 Kings xix. 29. This is mentioned as a type of what is promised in ver. 30, 31: "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah, shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this." The corn's springing again after it had been cut off with the sickle, and bringing forth another crop from the roots, that seemed to be dead, and so once and again, represents the church's reviving again, as it were, out of its own ashes, and flourishing like a plant, after it had seemingly been cut down past recovery. When the enemies of the church have done their utmost, and seem to have gained their point, and to have overthrown the church, so that the being of it is scarcely visible, but like a living root hid under ground; yet there is a secret life in it that will cause it to flourish again, and to take root downward, and bear fruit upward. This was fulfilled now at this time; for the king of Assyria had already taken and carried captive the ten tribes: and Sennacherib had also taken all the fenced cities of Judah, and ranged the country round about, and Jerusalem only remained; and Rabshakeh had in his own imagination already swallowed that up, as he had also in the fearful apprehensions of the Jews themselves. But yet God wrought a wonderful deliverance. He sent an angel, that in one night smote a hundred fourscore and five thousand in the enemy's camp.

XIX. In the reign of Uzziah, and the following reigns, God was pleased to raise up a set of eminent prophets, who should commit their prophecies to writing, and leave them for the use of his church in all ages. We before observed how that God began a constant succession of prophets in Israel in Samuel's time, and many of these prophets wrote by divine inspiration, and so added to the canon of Scripture, before Uzziah's time. But none of them are supposed to have written books of prophecies till now. Several of them wrote histories of the wonderful dispensations of God towards his church. This we

have observed already of Samuel, who is supposed to have written Judges and Ruth, and part of the first of Samuel, if not the book of Joshua. And Nathan and Gad seem to have written the rest of the two books of Samuel. And Nathan, with Ahijah and Iddo, wrote the history of Solomon, which is probably that which we have in the first book of Kings. The history of Israel seems to have been further carried on by Iddo and Shemaiah: 2 Chron. xii. 15, "Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies?" And after that the history seems to have been further carried on by the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani: 2 Chron. xx. 34, "Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Jehu, the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel," as we find him to be, 1 Kings xvi. 1, 7. And then it was further continued by the prophet Isaiah: 2 Chron. xxvi. 22, "Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, write." He probably did it as well in the second book of kings, as in the book of his prophecy. And the history was carried on and finished by other prophets after him.

Thus the prophets, even from Samuel's time, had from time to time been adding to the canon of Scripture by their historical writings. But now, in the days of Uzziah, did God first raise up a set of great prophets, not only to write histories, but to write books of their prophecies. The first of these is thought to be Hosea, the son of Beeri, and therefore his prophecy, or the word of the Lord by him, is called the *beginning of the word of the Lord*, as Hosea i. 2: "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea;" that is, the beginning or the first part, of the written word of that kind, viz., that which is written in books of prophecy. He prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. There were many other witnesses; for God raised up about the same time to commit their prophecies to writing, Isaiah, and Amos, and Jonah, and Micah, and Nahum, and probably some others; and so from that time forward God seemed to continue a succession of writing prophets.

This was a great dispensation of Providence, and a great advance made in the affair of redemption, which appears, if we consider what was said before, that the main business of the prophets was to foreshow Christ and his redemption. They were all forerunners of the great prophet. The main end why the spirit of prophecy was given them was, that they might give testimony to Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer, that was to come; and therefore the testimony of Jesus, and the spirit of prophecy, are spoken of as the same thing: Rev. xix. 10, "And I fell at his feet to worship him: and he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." And therefore we find that the great and main thing that the most of the prophets in their written prophecies insist upon, is Christ and his redemption, and the glorious times of the gospel, which should be in the latter days, according to their manner of expression. And though many other things were spoken of in their prophecies, yet it seems to be only as introductory to their prophecy of these great things. Whatever they prophecy of, here their prophecies commonly terminate, as you may see by a careful perusal of their writings.

These prophets were set to writing their prophecies by the Spirit of Christ that was in them, chiefly for that end, to foreshow and prepare the way for the coming of Christ, and the glory that should follow. And in what an exalted

strain do they all speak of those things! Many other things they speak of in men's usual language. But when they come upon this subject, what a joyful heavenly sublimity is there in the language they use about it! Some of them are very particular and full in their predictions of these things, and above all the prophet Isaiah, who is therefore deservedly called the *evangelical prophet.*

He seems to teach the glorious doctrines of the gospel almost as plainly as the apostles did, who preached after Christ was actually come. The Apostle Paul therefore takes notice, that the prophet Esaias is very bold, Rom. x. 20; i. e., as the meaning of the word, as used in the New Testament, is very plain, he speaks out very plainly and fully; so being "very bold" is used, 2 Cor. iii. 12, we use "great plainness of speech," or "boldness," as it is in the margin.

How plainly and fully does the prophet Isaiah describe the manner and circumstances, the nature and end of the suffering and sacrifice of Christ, in the 53d chapter of his prophecy! There is scarce a chapter in the New Testament itself which is more full on it. And how much, and in what a glorious strain, does the same prophet speak from time to time of the glorious benefits of Christ, the unspeakable blessings which shall redound to his church through his redemption! Jesus Christ, the person that this prophet spoke so much of, once appeared to Isaiah in the form of the human nature, the nature that he should afterwards take upon him. We have an account of it in the 6th chapter of his prophecy at the beginning: "I saw also the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple," &c. This was Christ that Isaiah now saw, as we are expressly told in the New Testament. See John xii. 39, 40, 41.

And if we consider the abundant prophecies of this and the other prophets, what a great increase is there of the light of the gospel, which had been growing from the fall of man to this day! How plentiful are the revelations and prophecies of Christ now, to what they were in the first period of the Old Testament, from Adam to Noah! Or to what they were in the second, from Noah to Abraham! Or to what they were before Moses, or in the time of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges! This dispensation that we are now speaking of, was also a glorious advance of the work of redemption by the great additions that were made to the canon of Scripture. Great part of the Old Testament was written now, from the days of Uzziah to the captivity into Babylon. And how excellent are those portions of it! What a precious treasure have those prophets committed to the church of God, tending greatly to confirm the gospel of Christ! and which has been of great comfort and benefit to God's church in all ages since, and doubtless will be to the end of the world.

PART VI.

From the Babylonish Captivity to the Coming of Christ.

I COME now to the *last period* of the Old Testament, viz., that which begins with *the Babylonish Captivity*, and extends to the *coming of Christ*, being the greatest part of six hundred years, to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this period.

But before I enter upon particulars, I would observe, in three things, wherein

this period is distinguished from the preceding periods of the times of the Old Testament.

1. Though we have no account of a great part of this period in the Scripture history, yet the events of this period are more the subject of Scripture prophecy, than any of the preceding periods. There are two ways wherein the Scriptures give account of the events by which the work of redemption is carried on; one is by history, and another is by prophecy: and in one or the other of these ways we have contained in the Scriptures an account how the work of redemption is carried on from the beginning to the end. Although the Scriptures do not contain a proper history of the whole, yet there is contained the whole chain of great events by which this affair hath been carried on from the foundation, soon after the fall of man, to the finishing of it at the end of the world, either in history or prophecy. And it is to be observed, that where the Scripture is wanting in one of these ways, it is made up in the other Where Scripture history fails, there prophecy takes place; so that the account is still carried on, and the chain is not broken till we come to the very last link of it in the consummation of all things.

And accordingly it is observable of this period or space of time that we are upon, that though it is so much less the subject of Scripture history than most of the preceding periods, so that there is above four hundred years of it that the Scripture gives us no history of; yet the events of this period are more the subject of Scripture prophecy than the events of all the preceding periods put together. Most of those remarkable prophecies of the book of Daniel do refer to events that were accomplished in this period: so most of those prophecies in Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, against Babylon, and Tyrus, and against Egypt, and many other nations, were fulfilled in this period.

So that the reason why the Scriptures give us no history of so great a part of this period, is not because the events of this period were not so important, or less worthy to be taken notice of, than the events of the foregoing periods; for I shall hereafter show how great and distinguishedly remarkable the events of this period were. But there are several other reasons which may be given of it. One is that it was the will of God that the spirit of prophecy should cease in this period (for reasons that may be given hereafter), so that there were no prophets to write the history of these times; and therefore God, designing this, took care that the great events of this period should not be without mention in his word; and so ordered it that the prophecies of Scripture should be more full here, than in the preceding periods. It is observable, that that set of writing prophets that God raised up in Israel, were raised up at the latter end of the foregoing period, and at the beginning of this, which it is likely was partly for that reason, that the time was now approaching, of which the spirit of prophecy having ceased, there was to be no Scripture history, and therefore no other Scripture account but what was given in prophecy.

And another reason that may be given why there was so great a part of this period left without an historical account in Scripture is, that God in his providence took care that there should be authentic and full accounts of the events of this period preserved in profane history. It is remarkable, and very worthy to be taken notice of, that with respect to the events of the five preceding periods, of which the Scriptures give the history, profane history gives us no account, or at least of but very few of them. There are many fabulous and uncertain accounts of things that happened before; but the beginning of the times of authentic profane history is judged to be but a little before Nebuchadnezzar's time, about a hundred years before. The learned men among the

Greeks and Romans used to call the ages before that *the fabulous age;* but the times after that they called the *historical age.* And from about that time to the coming of Christ, we have undoubted accounts in profane history of the principal events; accounts that wonderfully agree with the many prophecies that we have in Scripture of those times.

Thus did the great God, that disposes all things, order it. He took care to give an historical account of things from the beginning of the world, through all those former ages which profane history does not reach, and ceased not till he came to those latter ages in which profane history related things with some certainty: and concerning those times, he gives us abundant account in prophecy, that, by comparing profane history with those prophecies, we might see the agreement.

2. This period being the last period of the Old Testament, and the next to the coming of Christ, seems to have been remarkably distinguished from all others in the great revolutions that were among the nations of the earth, to make way for the kingdom of Christ. The time now drawing nigh, wherein Christ, the great King and Saviour of the world, was to come, great and mighty were the changes that were brought to pass in order to it. The way had been preparing for the coming of Christ from the fall of man, through all the foregoing periods: but now the time drawing nigh, things began to ripen apace for Christ's coming; and therefore divine Providence wrought wonderfully now. The greatest revolutions that any history whatsoever gives an account of, that ever had been from the flood, fell out in this period. Almost all the then known world, i. e., all the nations that were round about the land of Canaan, far and near, that were within the reach of their knowledge, were overturned again and again. All lands were in their turns subdued, captivated, and as it were emptied, and turned upside down, and that most of them repeatedly, in this period; agreeably to that prophecy, Isa. xxiv. 1, "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty; he maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof."

This emptying, and turning upside down, began with God's visible church, in their captivity by the king of Babylon. And then the cup from them went round to all other nations, agreeably to what God revealed to the prophet Jeremiah, xxv. 15—27. Here special respect seems to be had to the great revolutions that there were on the face of the earth in the times of the Babylonish empire. But after that there were three general overturnings of the world before Christ came, in the succession of the three great monarchies of the world that were after the Babylonish empire. The king of Babylon is represented in Scripture as overturning the world: but after that the Babylonish empire was overthrown by Cyrus; who founded the Persian empire in the room of it; which was of much greater extent than the Babylonish empire in its greatest glory Thus the world was overturned the second time. And then, after that, the Persian empire was overthrown by Alexander, and the Grecian empire was set up upon the ruins of it; which was still of much greater extent than the Persian empire: and thus there was a general overturning of the world a third time. And then, after that, the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans, and the Roman empire was established; which vastly exceeded all the foregoing empires in power and extent of dominion. And so the world was overturned the fourth time.

These several monarchies, and the great revolutions of the world under them, are abundantly spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. They are represented in Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold, silver, brass, and iron; and Daniel's

interpretation of it, in the second chapter of Daniel; and then in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, and the angel's interpretation of it in the seventh chapter of Daniel. And the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies is more particularly represented in the 8th chapter in Daniel's vision of the ram and the he-goat, and again in the 11th chapter of Daniel.

And besides these four general overturnings of the world, the world was kept in a constant tumult between whiles: and indeed the world was as it were in a continual convulsion through this whole period till Christ came. Before this period, the face of the earth was comparatively in quietness: though there were many great wars among the nations, yet we read of no such mighty and universal convulsions and overturnings as there were in this period. The nations of the world, most of them, had long remained on their lees as it were, without being emptied from vessel to vessel, as is said of Moab, Jer. xlviii. 11. Now these great overturnings was because the time of the great Messiah drew nigh. That they were to prepare the way for Christ's coming, is evident by Scripture, particularly by Ezek. xxi. 27: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him." The prophet, by repeating the word *overturn* three times, has respect to three overturnings, as in the Revelation, viii. 13. The repetition of the word *wo* three times, signifies three distinct woes; as appears by what follows, ix 12, "One wo is past;" and ix. 14, "The second wo is past, and behold the third wo cometh quickly."

It must be noted, that the prophet Ezekiel prophesied in the time of the Babylonish captivity; and therefore there were three great and general overturnings of the world to come after this prophecy, before Christ came; the first by the Persians, the second by the Grecians, the third by the Romans; and then after that, Christ, whose right it was to take the diadem, and reign, should come. Here these great overturnings are evidently spoken of, as preparatory to the coming and kingdom of Christ. But to understand the words aright, we must note the particular expression, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn *it*;" i. e., the diadem and crown of Israel, or the supreme temporal dominion over God's visible people. This God said should be no more, i. e., the crown should be taken off, and the diadem removed, as it is said in the foregoing verse. The supreme power over Israel should be no more in the royal line of David, to which it properly belonged, but should be removed away, and given to others, and overturned from one to another: first the supreme power over Israel should be in the hands of the Persians; and then it should be overturned again; and then it should be in the hands of the Grecians; and then it should be overturned again, and come into the hands of the Romans, and should be no more in the line of David, till that very person should come, that was the son of David, whose proper right it was, and then God would give it to him.

That those great shakings and revolutions of the nations of the world were all to prepare the way for Christ's coming and setting up his kingdom in the world, is further manifest by Haggai ii. 6, 7: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." And again, ver. 21, 22 and 23. It is evident by this, that these great revolutions and shakings of the nations, whereby the thrones of kingdoms, and armies were overthrown, and every one came down by the sword of his brother, were to prepare the way for the coming of him who is the desire of all nations.

The great changes and troubles that have sometimes been in the visible church of Christ, are in Rev. xii. 2 compared to the church's being in travail to bring forth Christ; so these great troubles and mighty revolutions that were in the world before Christ was born, were, as it were, the world's being in travail to bring forth the Son of God. The apostle, in the 8th of Romans, represents the whole creation as groaning and travailing in pain together until now, to bring forth the liberty and manifestation of the children of God. So the world as it were travailed in pain, and was in continual convulsions for several hundred years together, to bring forth the first-born child, and the only begotten Son of God. And those mighty revolutions were as so many pangs and throes in order to it. The world being so long a time kept in a state of war and bloodshed, prepared the way for the coming of the Prince of Peace, as it showed the great need the world stood in of such a prince to deliver the world from its miseries.

It pleased God to order it in his providence, that earthly power and dominion should be raised to its greatest height, and appear in its utmost glory, in those four great monarchies that succeeded one another, and that every one should be great and more glorious than the preceding, before he set up the kingdom of his Son. By this it appeared how much more glorious his spiritual kingdom was than the most glorious temporal kingdom. The strength and glory of Satan's kingdom in these four mighty monarchies, appeared in its greatest height: for those monarchies were the monarchies of the Heathen world, and so the strength of them was the strength of Satan's kingdom. God suffered Satan's kingdom to rise to so great a height of power and magnificence before his Son came to overthrow it, to prepare the way for the more glorious triumph of his Son. Goliath must have on all his splendid armor when the stripling David comes against him with a sling and stone, for the greater glory of David's victory. God suffered one of those great monarchies to subdue another, and erect itself on the other's ruins, appearing still in greater strength, and the last to be the stongest and mightiest of all; that so Christ, in overthrowing that, might as it were overthrow them all at once; as the stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, is represented as destroying the whole image, the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay; so that all became as the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

These mighty empires were suffered thus to overthrow the world, and destroy one another: and though their power was so great, yet they could not uphold themselves, but fell one after another, and came to nothing, even the last of them, that was the strongest, and had swallowed up the earth. It pleased God thus to show in them the instability and vanity of all earthly power and greatness; which served as a foil to set forth the glory of the kingdom of his Son, which never shall be destroyed, as appears by Dan. ii. 44: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." So greatly does this kingdom differ from all those kingdoms; they vanish away, and are left to other people; but this shall not be left to other people, but shall stand forever. God suffered the devil to do his utmost, and to establish his interest, by setting up the greatest, strongest, and most glorious kingdoms in the world that he could, before the despised Jesus overthrew him and his empire. Christ came into the world to bring down the high things of Satan's kingdom, that the hand of the Lord might be on every one that is proud and lofty, and every high tower, and every lofty mountain; as the prophet Isaiah

says, chap ii. 12, &c. And therefore these things were suffered to rise very high, that Christ might appear so much the more glorious in being above them.

Thus wonderfully did the great and wise Governor of the world prepare the way for the erecting of the glorious kingdom of his beloved Son Jesus.

3. Another thing for which this last period or space of time before Christ was particularly remarkable, was the wonderful preservation of the church through all those overturnings. The preservation of the church was on some accounts more remarkable through this period, than through any of the foregoing. It was very wonderful that the church, which in this period was so weak, and in so low a state, and mostly subject to the dominion of Heathen monarchies, should be preserved for five or six hundred years together, while the world was so often overturned, and the earth was rent in pieces, and made so often empty and waste, and the inhabitants of it came down so often every one by the sword of his brother. I say it was wonderful that the church, in its weak and low state, being but a little handful of men, should be preserved in all these great convulsions; especially considering that the land of Judea, the chief place of the church's residence, lay in the midst of them, as it were in the middle between the contending parties, and was very much the seat of war amongst them, and was often overrun and subdued, and sometimes in the hands of one people, and sometimes another, and very much the object of the envy and hatred of all Heathen nations, and often almost ruined by them, often great multitudes of its inhabitants being slain, and the land in a great measure depopulated; and those who had them in their power, often intended the utter destruction of the whole nation. Yet they were upheld; they were preserved in their captivity in Babylon, and they were upheld again under all the dangers they passed through under the kings of Persia, and the much greater dangers they were liable to under the empire of the Greeks, and afterwards when the world was trodden down by the Romans.

And their preservation through this period was also distinguishingly remarkable, in that we never read of the church's suffering persecution in any former period in any measure to such a degree as they did in this, under Antiochus Epiphanes, of which more afterwards. This wonderful preservation of the church through all these overturnings of the world, gives light and confirmation to what we read in the beginning of the 46th Psalm: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

Thus I have taken notice of some general things wherein this last period of the Old Testament times were distinguished. I come now to consider how the work of redemption was carried on in particulars.—And,

I. The first thing that here offers is the captivity of the Jews into Babylon. This was a great dispensation of Providence, and such as never was before. The children of Israel in the time of the judges, had often been brought under their enemies; and many particular persons were carried captive at other times. But never had there been any such thing as destroying the whole land, the sanctuary, and the city of Jerusalem, and all the cities and villages of the land, and carrying the whole body of the people out of their own land into a country many hundred miles distant, and leaving the land of Canaan empty of God's visible people. The ark had once forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, and was carried captive into the land of the Philistines: but never had there been any

such thing as burning the sanctuary, and utterly destroying the ark, and carrying away all the sacred vessels and utensils, and breaking up all their stated worship in the land, and the land's lying waste and empty for so many years together. How lively are these things set forth in the Lamentations of Jeremiah!

The work of redemption was promoted by this remarkable dispensation in these following ways.

1. It finally cured that nation of their itch after idolatry. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, chap. ii. 18, speaks of the abolishing of idolatry as one thing that should be done to this end: "And the idols he shall utterly abolish." When the time was drawing near, that God would abolish Heathen idolatry, through the greater part of the known world, as he did by the preaching of the gospel after Christ came, it pleased him first to abolish Heathenism among his own people; and he did it now by their captivity into Babylon; a presage of that abolishing of idols, that God was about to bring to pass by Christ through so great a part of the Heathen world.

This nation that was addicted to idolatry before for so many ages, and that nothing would cure them of, not all the reproofs, and warnings, and corrections, that they had, and all the judgments God inflicted on them for it; yet now were finally cured; so that however some might fall into this sin afterwards, as they did about the time of Antiochus's persecution, yet the nation, as a nation, never showed any hankering after this sin any more. This was a remarkable and wonderful change in that people, and what directly promoted the work of redemption, as it was a great advancement of the interest of religion.

2. It was one thing that prepared the way of Christ's coming, and setting up the glorious dispensation of the gospel, as it took away many of those things wherein consisted the glory of the Jewish dispensation. In order to introduce the glorious dispensation of the gospel, the external glory of the Jewish church must be diminished, as we observed before. This the Babylonish captivity did many ways; it brought the people very low.

First, It removed the temporal diadem of the house of David away from them, i. e., the supreme and independent government of themselves. It took away the crown and diadem from the nation. The time now approaching when Christ, the great and everlasting king of his church, was to reign, it was time for the typical kings to withdraw. As God said by Ezekiel, chap. xxi. 26: "He removed the crown and diadem, that it might be no more, till he should come, whose right it was." The Jews henceforward were always dependent on the governing power of other nations, until Christ came, for near six hundred years, excepting about ninety years, during which space they maintained a sort of independence, by continual wars, under the dominion of the Maccabees and their posterity.

Again, by the captivity, the glory and magnificence of the temple was taken away, and the temple that was built afterwards, was nothing in comparison with it. Thus it was meet, when the time drew nigh that the glorious antitype of the temple should appear, that the typical temple should have its glory withdrawn.

Again, another thing that they lost by the captivity, was the two tables of the testimony delivered to Moses, written with the finger of God; the two tables on which God with his own finger wrote the ten commandments on Mount Sinai. These seem to have been preserved in the ark till the captivity. These were in the ark when Solomon placed the ark in the temple, 1 Kings viii. 9. There was nothing in the ark, save the two tables of stone, which Moses

put there at Horeb. And we have no reason to suppose any other, but that they remained there as long as that temple stood. But the Jews speak of these as finally lost at that time; though the same commandments were preserved in the book of the law. These tables also were withdrawn on the approach of their antitype.

Again, another thing that was lost that the Jews had before, was the Urim and Thummim. This is evident by Ezra ii. 63: "And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there should stand up a priest with Urim and Thummim." And we have no account that this was ever restored; but the ancient writings of the Jews say the contrary. What this Urim and Thummim was, I shall not now inquire; but only observe, that it was something by which the high priest inquired of God, and received immediate answers from him, or by which God gave forth immediate oracles on particular occasions. This was now withdrawn, the time approaching when Christ, the antitype of the Urim and Thummim, the great word and oracle of God, was to come.

Another thing that the ancient Jews say was wanting in the second temple, was the Shechinah, or cloud of glory over the mercy seat. This was promised to be in the tabernacle, Levit. xvi. 2: "For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat." And we read elsewhere of the cloud of glory descending into the tabernacle, Exod. xl. 35; and so we do likewise with respect to Solomon's temple. But we have no account that this cloud of glory was in the second temple. And the ancient accounts of the Jews say, that there was no such thing in the second temple. This was needless in the second temple, considering that God had promised that he would fill this temple with glory another way, viz, by Christ's coming into it; which was afterwards fulfilled. See Haggai ii. 7: "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

Another thing, that the Jews in their ancient writings mention as being now withdrawn, was the fire from heaven on the altar. When Moses built the tabernacle and altar in the wilderness, and the first sacrifices were offered on it, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering, as in Levit. ix. 24; and so again, when Solomon built the temple, and offered the first sacrifices, as you may see in 2 Chron. vii. 1. And this fire was never to go out, but with the greatest care to be kept alive, as God commanded, Levit. vi. 13: "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar: it shall never go out." And there is no reason to suppose the fire in Solomon's time ever went out till the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. But then it was extinguished, and never was restored. We have no account of its being given on the building of the second temple, as we have at the building of the tabernacle and first temple. But the Jews, after their return, were forced to make use of their common fire instead of it, according to the ancient tradition of the Jews. Thus the lights of the Old Testament go out, on the approach of the glorious Sun of righteousness.

3. The captivity into Babylon was the occasion of another thing which did afterwards much promote the setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world, and that was the dispersion of the Jews through the greater part of the known world, before the coming of Christ. For the whole nation being carried away far out of their own land, and continued in a state of captivity for so long a time, they got them possessions, and built them houses, and settled themselves in the land of their captivity, agreeably to the direction that Jeremiah gave them, in the letter he wrote to them in the 29th chapter of Jeremiah. And therefore,

when Cyrus gave them liberty to return to the land where they had formerly dwelt, many of them never returned; they were not willing to leave their settlements and possessions there, to go into a desolate country, many hundred miles distant, which none but the old men among them had ever seen; and therefore they were but few, but a small number that returned, as we see in the accounts we have in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Great numbers tarried behind, though they still retained the same religion with those that returned, so far as it could be practised in a foreign land. Those messengers that we read of in the 7th chapter of Zechariah, that came to inquire of the priests and prophets in Jerusalem, Sherezer and Regemmelech, are supposed to be messengers sent from the Jews that remained still in Babylon.

Those Jews that remained still in that country were soon, by the great changes that happened in the world, dispersed thence into all the adjacent countries. And hence we find, that in Esther's time, which was after the return from the captivity, the Jews were a people that were dispersed throughout all parts of the vast Persian empire, that extended from India to Ethiopia; as you may see, Esth. iii. 8: "And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom," &c. And so they continued dispersed till Christ came, and till the apostles went forth to preach the gospel. But yet these dispersed Jews retained their religion in this dispersion. Their captivity, as I said before, thoroughly cured them of their idolatry; and it was their manner, for as many of them as could from time to time, to go up to the land of Judea to Jerusalem at their great feasts. Hence we read in the 2d chapter of Acts, that at the time of the great feast of Pentecost, there were Jews abiding at Jerusalem out of every nation under heaven.—These were Jews come up from all countries where they were dispersed, to worship at that feast. And hence we find, in the history of the Acts of the Apostles, that wherever the apostles went preaching through the world, they found Jews. They came to such a city, and to such a city, and went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Antiochus the Great, about two hundred years before Christ, on a certain occasion, transplanted two thousand families of Jews from the country about Babylon into Asia the Less; and so they and their posterity, many of them, settled in Pontus, Galatia, Phrygia, Pamphilia, and in Ephesus; and from thence settled in Athens, and Corinth, and Rome. Whence came those synagogues in those places that the Apostle Paul preached in.

Now, this dispersion of the Jews through the world before Christ came, did many ways prepare the way for his coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world.

One was, that this was a means of raising a general expectation of the Messiah through the world about the time that he actually came. For the Jews wherever they were dispersed, carried the holy Scriptures with them, and so the prophecies of the Messiah; and being conversant with the nations among whom they lived, they, by that means, became acquainted with these prophecies, and with the expectations of the Jews of their glorious Messiah; and by this means, the birth of such a glorious person in Judea about that time began to be the general expectation of the nations of the world, as appears by the writings of the learned men of the Heathen that lived about that time, which are still extant; particularly Virgil, the famous poet that lived in Italy a little before Christ was born, has a poem about the expectation of a great prince that was to be born, and the happy times of righteousness and peace that he was to introduce; some of it very much in the language of the prophet Isaiah

Another way that this dispersed state of the Jews prepared the way for Christ was, that it showed the necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation and introducing a new dispensation of the covenant of grace. It showed the necessity of abolishing the ceremonial law, and the old Jewish worship; for by this means, the observance of that ceremonial law became impracticable even by the Jews themselves; for the ceremonial law was adapted to the state of a people dwelling together in the same land, where was the city that God had chosen; where was the temple, the only place where they might offer sacrifices; and where it was lawful for their priests and Levites to officiate, where they were to bring their first fruits, and where were their cities of refuge and the like. But the Jews, by this dispersion, lived, many of them, in other lands, more than a thousand miles distant, when Christ came; which made the observation of their laws of sacrifices, and the like, impracticable. And though their forefathers might be to blame in not going up to the land of Judea when they were permitted by Cyrus, yet the case was now, as to many of them at least, become impracticable; which showed the necessity of introducing a new dispensation, that should be fitted, not only to one particular land, but to the general circumstances and use of all nations of the world.

Again, another way that this dispersion of the Jews through the world prepared the way for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the world, was, that it contributed to the making the facts concerning Jesus Christ publicly known through the world. For, as I observed before, the Jews that lived in other countries, used frequently to go up to Jerusalem at their three great feasts, which were from year to year; and so, by this means, they could not but become acquainted with the news of the wonderful things that Christ did in that land. We find that they were present at, and took great notice of that great miracle of raising Lazarus, which excited the curiosity of those foreign Jews, that came up to the feast of the Passover, to see Jesus; as you may see in John xii. 19, 20, 21. These Greeks were foreign Jews and proselytes, as is evident by their coming to worship at the feast of the Passover. The Jews that lived abroad among the Greeks, and spoke their language, were called *Greeks*, or *Hellenists;* so they are called *Grecians*, Acts vi. 1. These Grecians here spoken of were not Gentile Christians; for this was before the calling of the Gentiles.

By the same means, the Jews that went up from other countries became acquainted with Christ's crucifixion. Thus the disciples, going to Emmaus, say to Christ, when they did not know him, Luke xxiv. 18: "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days?" plainly intimating, that the things concerning Jesus were so publicly known to all men, that it was wonderful to find any man unacquainted with them And so afterwards they became acquainted with the news of his resurrection; and when they went home again into their own countries, they carried the news with them, and so made these facts public through the world, as they had made the prophecies of them public before.

After this, those foreign Jews that came to Jerusalem, took great notice of the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the wonderful effects of it; and many of them were converted by it, viz., Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and the strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians. And so they did not only carry back the news of the facts of Christianity, but Christianity itself, into their own countries with them; which contributed much to the spreading of it through the world.

Again, another way that the dispersion of the Jews contributed to the setting up of the gospel kingdom in the world was, that it opened a door for the introduction of the Apostles, in all places where they came to preach the gospel. For almost in all places where they came to preach the gospel, they found Jews, and synagogues of the Jews, where the holy Scriptures were wont to be read, and the true God worshipped; which was a great advantage to the apostles in their spreading the gospel through the world. For their way was, into whatever city they came, first to go into the synagogue of the Jews (they being people of the same nation), and there to preach the gospel unto them. And hereby their coming, and their new doctrine, was taken notice of by their Gentile neighbors, whose curiosity excited them to hear what they had to say; which became a fair occasion to the apostles to preach the gospel to them. It appears that it was thus, by the account we have of things in the Acts of the Apostles. And these Gentiles having been before, many of them, prepared in some measure, by the knowledge they had of the Jews' religion, and of their worship of one God, and of their prophecies, and expectation of a Messiah; which knowledge they derived from the Jews, who had long been their neighbors: this opened the door for the gospel to have access to them. And the work of the apostles with them was doubtless much easier than if they never had heard any thing before of any expectation of such a person as the apostles preached, or any thing about the worship of one only true God.

So many ways did the Babylonish captivity greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming.

II. The next particular that I would take notice of is, the addition made to the canon of Scripture in the time of the captivity, in those two remarkable portions of Scripture, the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel. Christ appeared to each of these prophets in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to take upon him. The prophet Ezekiel gives an account of his thus appearing to him repeatedly, as Ezek. i. 26: "And above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it;" and so chap. viii. 1, 2: "There stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision." There are several things that make it evident, that this was Christ, that I cannot now stand to mention particularly. So Christ appeared again as a man to this prophet, chap. x. 5, 6: "Then I lift up mine eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz; his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." Comparing this vision with that of the Apostle John in the 1st chapter of Revelation, makes it manifest that it was Christ. And the prophet Daniel, in the historical part of his book, gives an account of a very remarkable appearance of Christ in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We have the account of it in the 3d chapter. In the 25th verse, Christ is said to be like the Son of God; and it is manifest that he appeared in the form of man: "Lo, I see four *men* loose—and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Christ did not only here appear in the form of the human nature, but he appeared in a furnace, saving those persons who believed on him from that furnace; by which is represented to us, how Christ, by coming himself

into the furnace of God's wrath, saves those that believe in him from that furnace, so that it has no power on them; and the wrath of God never reaches or touches them, so much as to singe the hair of their head.

These two prophets, in many respects, were more particular concerning the coming of Christ, and his glorious gospel kingdom, than any of the prophets had been before. They both of them mention those three great overturnings of the world that should be before he came. Ezekiel is particular in several places concerning the coming of Christ. The prophet Daniel is more particular in foretelling the time of the coming of Christ than ever any prophet had been before, in the 9th chapter of his prophecy; who foretold, that it should be seventy weeks, i. e., seventy weeks of years, or seventy times seven years, or four hundred and ninety years, from the decree to rebuild and restore the state of the Jews, till the Messiah should be crucified; which must be reckoned from the commission given to Ezra by Artaxerxes, that we have an account of in the 7th chapter of Ezra; whereby the very particular time of Christ's crucifixion was pointed out, which never had been before.

The prophet Ezekiel is very particular in the mystical description of the gospel church, in his account of his vision of the temple and city, in the latter part of his prophecy. The prophet Daniel points out the order of particular events that should come to pass relating to the Christian church after Christ was come, as the rise of Antichrist, and the continuance of his reign, and his fall, and the glory that should follow.

Thus does gospel light still increase, the nearer we come to the time of Christ's birth.

III. The next particular I would mention is, the destruction of Babylon, and the overthrow of the Chaldean empire by Cyrus. The destruction of Babylon was in that night in which Belshazzar the king, and the city in general, were drowned in a drunken festival, which they kept to their gods, when Daniel was called to read the hand-writing on the wall, Dan. v. 30; and it was brought about in such a manner, as wonderfully to show the hand of God, and remarkably to fulfil his word by his prophets, which I cannot now stand particularly to relate. Now that great city, which had long been an enemy to the city of God, his Jerusalem, was destroyed, after it had stood ever since the first building of Babel, which was about seventeen hundred years. If the check that was put to the building of this city at its beginning, whereby they were prevented from carrying of it to that extent and magnificence that they intended; I say, if this promoted the work of redemption, as I have before shown it did, much more did this destruction of it.

It was a remarkable instance of God's vengeance on the enemies of his redeemed church; for God brought this destruction on Babylon for the injuries they did to God's children, as is often set forth in the prophets. It also promoted the work of redemption, as thereby God's people, that were held captive by them, were set at liberty to return to their own land to rebuild Jerusalem; and therefore Cyrus, who did it, is called God's shepherd therein, Isa. xliv. latter end; and xlv. 1. And these are over and above those ways wherein the setting up and overthrowing the four monarchies of the world did promote the work of redemption, which have been before observed.

IV. What next followed this was the return of the Jews to their own land, and rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. Cyrus, as soon as he had destroyed the Babylonish empire, and had erected the Persian empire on its ruins, made a decree in favor of the Jews, that they might return to their own land, and rebuild their city and temple. This return of the Jews out of the Babylonish

captivity is, next to the redemption out of Egypt, the most remarkable of all the Old Testament redemptions, and most insisted on in Scripture, as a type of the great redemption of Jesus Christ. It was under the hand of one of the legal ancestors of Christ, viz. Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, whose Babylonish name was Shesbazzar. He was the governor of the Jews, and their leader in their first return out of captivity; and together with Joshua the son of Jozedek the high priest, had the chief hand in rebuilding the temple. This redemption was brought about by the hand of Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest, as the redemption out of Egypt was brought about by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

The return out of the captivity was a remarkable dispensation of Providence. It was remarkable, that the heart of a Heathen prince, as Cyrus was, should be so inclined to favor such a design as he did, not only in giving the people liberty to return, and rebuild the city and temple, but in giving charge that they should be helped with silver and gold, and with goods, and with beasts, as we read in Ezra i. 4. And afterwards God wonderfully inclined the heart of Darius to further the building of the house of God with his own tribute money, and by commanding their bitter enemies, the Samaritans, who had been striving to hinder them, to help them without fail, by furnishing them with all that they needed in order to it, and to supply them day by day; making a decree, that whosoever failed of it, timber should be pulled down out of his house and he hanged thereon, and his house made a dunghill; as we have an account in the 6th chapter of Ezra. And after this God inclined the heart of Artaxerxes, another king of Persia, to promote the work of preserving the state of the Jews, by his ample commission to Ezra, which we have an account of in the 7th chapter of Ezra; helping them abundantly with silver and gold of his own bounty, and offering more, as should be needful, out of the king's treasure-house, and commanding his treasurers beyond the river Euphrates to give more, as should be needed, unto a hundred talents of silver, and a hundred measures of wheat, a hundred baths of wine, and a hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much; and giving leave to establish magistrates in the land; and freeing the priests of toll, tribute, and custom, and other things, which render this decree and commission by Artaxerxes the most full and ample in the Jews' favor of any that, at any time, had been given for the restoring of Jerusalem: and therefore, in Daniel's prophecy, this is called *the decree* for restoring and building Jerusalem; and hence the seventy weeks are dated.

And then, after this, another favorable commission was granted by the king of Persia to Nehemiah, which we have an account of in the 2d chapter of Nehemiah.

It was remarkable that the hearts of heathen princes should be so inclined. It was the effect of *his* power, who hath the hearts of kings in his hands, and turneth them whithersoever he will; and it was a remarkable instance of his favor to his people.

Another remarkable circumstance of this restitution of the state of the Jews to their own land, was, that it was accomplished against so much opposition of their bitter indefatigable enemies, the Samaritans, who for a long time together, with all the malice and craft they could exercise, opposed the Jews in this affair, and sought their destruction; one while by Bishlam, Mithridath, Tabeel, Rehum, and Shimshai, as in Ezra iv., and then by Tatnai, Shetharbozenai, and their companions, as in chap. v., and afterwards by Sanballat and Tobiah, as we read in the book of Nehemiah.

We have showed before how the settlement of the people in this land in Joshua's time promoted the work of redemption. On the same accounts does

their restitution belong to the same work. The resettlement of the Jews in the land of Canaan belongs to this work, as it was a necessary means of preserving the Jewish church and dispensation in being, till Christ should come. If it had not been for this restoration of the Jewish church, and temple, and worship, the people had remained without any temple, and land of their own, that should be as it were their head-quarters, a place of worship, habitation, and resort; the whole constitution, which God had done so much to establish, would have been in danger of utterly failing, long before that six hundred years had been out, which was from about the time of the captivity till Christ. And so all that preparation which God had been making for the coming of Christ, from the time of Abraham, would have been in vain. Now that very temple was built that God would fill with glory by Christ's coming into it, as the prophets Haggai and Zechariah told the Jews, to encourage them in building it.

V. The next particular I would observe, is the addition made to the canon of the Scriptures soon after the captivity by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, who were prophets sent to encourage the people in their work of rebuilding the city and temple; and the main argument they make use of to that end, is the approach of the time of the coming of Christ. Haggai foretold that Christ should be of Zerubbabel's legal posterity; last chapter, last verse. This seems to be the last and most particular revelation of the descent of Christ, till the angel Gabriel was sent to reveal it to his mother Mary.

VI. The next thing I would take notice of, was the pouring out of the Spirit of God that accompanied the ministry of Ezra the priest after the captivity. That there was such a pouring out of the Spirit of God that accompanied Ezra's ministry, is manifest by many things in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Presently after Ezra came up from Babylon, with the ample commission which Artaxerxes gave him, whence Daniel's seventy weeks began, he set himself to reform the vices and corruptions he found among the Jews, and his great success in it we have an account of in the 10th chapter of Ezra; so that there appeared a very general and great mourning of the congregation of Israel for their sins, which was accompanied with a solemn covenant that the people entered into with God; and this was followed with a great and general reformation, as we have there an account. And the people about the same time, with great zeal, and earnestness, and reverence, gathered themselves together to hear the word of God read by Ezra, and gave diligent attention while Ezra and the other priests preached to them, by reading and expounding the law, and were greatly affected in the hearing of it. They wept when they heard the words of the law, and set themselves to observe the law, and kept the feast of tabernacles, as the Scripture observes, after such a manner as it had not been kept since the days of Joshua the son of Nun, as we have an account of in the 8th chapter of Nehemiah. And after this, having separated themselves from all strangers, they solemnly observed a fast, by hearing the word of God, confessing their sins, and renewing their covenant with God; and manifested their sincerity in that transaction by actually reforming many abuses in religion and morals, as we learn from the 9th and following chapters of Nehemiah.

It is observable, that it has been God's manner in every remarkable new establishment of the state of his visible church, to give a remarkable outpouring of his Spirit. So it was on the first establishment of the church of the Jews at their first coming into Canaan under Joshua, as has been observed; and so it was now in this second settlement of the church in the same land in the time of Ezra; and so it was on the first establishment of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, God wisely and graciously laying the foundation of those

establishments in a work of the Holy Spirit, for the lasting benefit of the state of his church, thenceforward continued in those establishments. And this pouring out of the Spirit of God, was a final cure of that nation of that particular sin which just before they especially run into, viz., intermarrying with the Gentiles; for however inclined to it they were before, they ever after showed an aversion to it.

VII. Ezra added to the canon of the Scriptures. He wrote the book of Ezra, and he is supposed to have written the two books of Chronicles, at least to have compiled them, if he was not the author of the materials, or all the parts of these writings. That these books were written, or compiled and completed, after the captivity, the things contained in the books themselves make manifest; for the genealogies contained therein, are brought down below the captivity, as 1 Chron. iii. 17, &c. We have there an account of the posterity of Jehoiachin for several successive generations. And there is mention in these books of this captivity into Babylon, as of a thing past, and of things that were done on the return of the Jews after the captivity, as you may see in the 9th chapter. The chapter is mostly filled up with an account of things that came to pass after the captivity into Babylon, as you may see by comparing it with what is said in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And that Ezra was the person that compiled these books, is probable by this, because they conclude with words that we know are the words of Ezra's history. The two last verses are Ezra's words in the history he gives in the two first verses of the book of Ezra.

VIII. Ezra is supposed to have collected all the books of which the Holy Scriptures did then consist, and to have disposed them in their proper order. Ezra is often spoken of as a noted and eminent scribe of the law of God, and the canon of Scripture in his time was manifestly under his special care; and the Jews, from the first accounts we have from them, have always held that the canon of Scripture, so much of it as was then extant, was collected and orderly disposed and settled by Ezra; and from him they have delivered it down in the order in which he disposed it, till Christ's time, when the Christian church received it from them, and have delivered it down to our times. The truth of this is allowed as undoubted by divines in general.

IX. The work of redemption was carried on and promoted in this period by greatly multiplying the copies of the law, and appointing the constant public reading of them in all the cities of Israel in their synagogues. It is evident that before the captivity there were but few copies of the law. There was the original, laid up beside the ark; and the kings were required to write out a copy of the law for their use, and the law was required to be read to the whole congregation of Israel once every seventh year. And we have no account of any other stated public reading of the law before the captivity but this. And it is manifest by several things that might be mentioned, that copies of the law were exceeding rare before the captivity. But after the captivity, the constant reading of the law was set up in every synagogue throughout the land. First, they began with reading the law, and then they proceeded to establish the constant reading of the other books of the Old Testament. And lessons were read ou of the Old Testament, as made up of both the law and the other parts of the Scripture then extant, in all the synagogues, which were set up in every city, and everywhere, wherever the Jews in any considerable number dwelt, as our meeting-houses are. Thus we find it was in Christ's and the apostles' time: Acts xv. 21, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." This custom is universally supposed, both by Jews and Christians, to be begun by Ezra. There were

doubtless public assemblies before the captivity into Babylon. They used to assemble at the temple at their great feasts, and were directed when they were at a loss about any thing in the law, to go to the priest for instruction; and they used also to resort to the prophets' houses, and we read of synagogues in the land before, Psal. lxxiv. 8. But it is not supposed that they had copies of the law for constant public reading and expounding through the land before, as afterwards. This was one great means of their being preserved from idolatry.

X. The next thing I would mention, is God's remarkably preserving the church and nation of the Jews, when they were in imminent danger of being universally destroyed by Haman. We have the story in the book of Esther, with which you are acquainted. This series of providences was very wonderful in preventing this destruction. Esther was doubtless born for this end, to be the instrument of this remarkable preservation.

XI. After this the canon of Scripture was further added to in the books of Nehemiah and Esther; the one by Nehemiah himself: and whether the other was written by Nehemiah, or Mordecai, or Malachi, is not of importance for us to know, so long as it is one of those books that were always admitted and received as a part of their canon by the Jews, and was among those books that the Jews called their Scriptures in Christ's time, and as such was approved by him. For Christ does often, in his speeches to the Jews, manifestly approve and confirm those books which amongst them went by the name of the *Scriptures*, as might easily be shown, if there were time for it.

XII. After this the canon of the Old Testament was completed and sealed by Malachi. The manner of his concluding his prophecy seems to imply, that they were to expect no more prophecies, and no more written revelations from God, till Christ should come. For in the last chapter he prophesies of Christ's coming, ver. 2, 3: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall; and ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Then we read in ver. 4, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments," i. e., Remember and improve what ye have; keep close to that written rule you have, as expecting no more additions to it till the night of the Old Testament is over, and the Sun of Righteousness shall at length arise.

XIII. Soon after this, the spirit of prophecy ceased among that people till the time of the New Testament. Thus the Old Testament light, the stars of the long night, began apace to hide their heads, the time of the Sun of Righteousness now drawing nigh. We before observed, how the kings of the house of David ceased before the true king and head of the church came; and how the cloud of glory withdrew, before Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory, appeared; and so as to several other things. And now at last the spirit of prophecy ceased. The time of the great Prophet of God was now so nigh, it was time for their typical prophets to be silent.

We have now gone through with the time that we have any historical account of in the writings of the Old Testament, and the last thing that was mentioned, by which the work of redemption was promoted, was the ceasing of the spirit of prophecy.

I now proceed to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the remaining times that were before Christ: in which we have not that thread of Scripture history to guide us that we have had hitherto: but have these

three things to guide us, viz., the prophecies of the Old Testament, human histories of those times, and some occasional mention made, and some evidence given, of some things which happened in those times, in the New Testament. Therefore,

XIV. The next particular that I shall mention under this period, is the destruction of the Persian empire, and setting up of the Grecian empire by Alexander. This came to pass about sixty or seventy years after the times wherein the prophet Malachi is supposed to have prophesied, and about three hundred and thirty years before Christ. This was the third overturning of the world that came to pass in this period, and was greater and more remarkable than either of the foregoing. It was very remarkable on account of the suddenness of that conquest of the world which Alexander made, and the greatness of the empire which he set up, which much exceeded all the foregoing in its extent.

This event is much spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. This empire is represented by the third kingdom of brass, in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as in Dan. ii.; and in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, is represented by the third beast that was like a leopard, that had on his back four wings of a fowl, to represent the swiftness of its conquest, chap. vii.; and is more particularly represented by the he-goat in the 8th chapter, that came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground, to represent how swiftly Alexander overran the world. The angel himself does expressly interpret this he-goat to signify the king of Grecia, ver. 21. The rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king, i. e., Alexander himself.

After Alexander had conquered the world, he soon died; and his dominion did not descend to his posterity, but four of his principal captains divided his empire between them, as it there follows. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power; so you may see in the 11th chapter of Daniel. The angel after foretelling of the Persian empire, then proceeded to foretell of Alexander, ver. 3: "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will." And then he foretells, in the 4th verse, of the dividing of his kingdom between his four captains: "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those."

Two of these four captains, whose kingdoms were next to Judea, the one had Egypt and the neighboring countries on the south of Judea, and the other had Syria and the neighboring countries north of Judea; and these two are those that are called the kings of the north and of the south in the 11th chapter of Daniel.

Now, this setting up of the Grecian empire did greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world. Besides those ways common to the other overturnings of the world in this period, that have been already mentioned, there is one peculiar to this revolution which I would take notice of, which did remarkably promote the work of redemption; and that was, that it made the Greek language common in the world. To have one common language understood and used through the greater part of the world, was a thing that did greatly prepare the way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom. This gave advantage for spreading the gospel from one nation to another, and so through all nations with vastly greater ease, than if every nation had a distinct language, and did not understand each other. For though some of the

first preachers of the gospel had the gift of languages, so that they could preach in any language; yet all had not this particular gift; and they that had, could not exercise it when they would, but only at special seasons, when the Spirit of God was pleased to inspire them in this way. And the church in different parts of the world, as the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, and others, which were in countries distant one from another, could not have had that communication one with another, which we have an account of in the book of Acts, if they had had no common language. So it was before the Grecian empire was set up. But after this, many in all these countries well understood the same language, viz., the Greek language; which wonderfully opened the door for mutual communication between those churches, so far separated one from another. And again, the making the Greek language common through so great a part of the world, did wonderfully make way for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, because it was the language in which the New Testament was to be originally written. The apostles propagated the gospel through many scores of nations; and if they could not have understood the Bible any otherwise than as it was translated into so many languages, it would have rendered the spreading of the gospel vastly more difficult. But by the Greek language being made common to all, they all understood the New Testament of Jesus Christ in the language in which the apostles and evangelists originally wrote it; so that as soon as ever it was written by its original penmen, it immediately lay open to the world in a language that was commonly understood everywhere, as there was no language that was so commonly understood in the world in Christ's and the apostles' time as the Greek; the cause of which was the setting up of the Grecian empire in the world.

XV. The next thing I shall take notice of is, the translating of the Scriptures of the Old Testament into a language that was commonly understood by the Gentiles. The translation that I here speak of is that into the Greek language, that is commonly called the Septuagint, or the translation of the Seventy. This is supposed to have been made about fifty or sixty years after Alexander's conquering the world. This is the first translation that ever was made of the Scriptures that we have any credible account of. The canon of the Old Testament had been completed by the prophet Malachi but about a hundred and twenty years before, in its original; and hitherto the Scriptures had remained locked up from all other nations but the Jews, in the Hebrew tongue, which was understood by no other nation. But now it was translated into the Greek language, which, as we observed before, was a language that was commonly understood by the nations of the world.

This translation of the Old Testament is still extant, and is commonly in the hands of learned men in these days, and is made great use of by them. The Jews have many fables about the occasion and manner of this translation; but the truth of the case is supposed to be this, that multitudes of the Jews living in other parts of the world besides Judea, and being born and bred among the Greeks, the Greek became their common language, and they did not understand the original Hebrew; and therefore they procured the Scriptures to be translated for their use into the Greek language; and so henceforward the Jews, in all countries, except Judea, were wont in their synagogues to make use of this translation instead of the Hebrew.

This translation of the Scriptures into a language, commonly understood through the world, prepared the way for Christ's coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world, and afterwards did greatly promote it. For as the apostles went preaching through the world, they made great use of the Scrip-

tures of the Old Testament, and especially of the prophecies concerning Christ that were contained in them. And by means of this translation, and by the Jews being scattered everywhere, they had the Scriptures at hand in a language that was understood by the Gentiles: and they did principally make use of this translation in their preaching and writings wherever they went; as is evident by this, that in all the innumerable quotations that are made out of the Old Testament in their writings in the New Testament, they are almost everywhere in the very words of the Septuagint. The sense is the same as it is in the original Hebrew; but very often the words are different, as all that are acquainted with their Bibles know. When the apostles in their epistles, and the evangelists in their histories, cite passages out of the Old Testament, it is very often in different words from what we have in the Old Testament, as all know. But yet these citations are almost universally in the very words of the Septuagint version; for that may be seen by comparing them together, they being both written in the same language. This makes it evident, that the apostles, in their preaching and writings, commonly made use of this translation. So this very translation was that which was principally used in Christian churches through most nations of the world for several hundred years after Christ.

XVI. The next thing is the wonderful preservation of the church when it was imminently threatened and persecuted under the Grecian empire.

The first time they were threatened was by Alexander himself. When he was besieging the city of Tyre, sending to the Jews for assistance and supplies for his army, and they refusing, out of a conscientious regard to their oath to the king of Persia, he being a man of a very furious spirit, agreeable to the Scripture representation of the rough he-goat, marched against them, with a design to cut them off. But the priests going out to meet him in their priestly garments, when he met them, God wonderfully turned his heart to spare them, and favor them, much as he did the heart of Esau when he met Jacob.

After this, one of the kings of Egypt, a successor of one of Alexander's four captains, entertained a design of destroying the nation of the Jews; but was remarkably and wonderfully prevented by a stronger interposition of heaven for their preservation.

But the most wonderful preservation of them all, in this period, was under the cruel persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, and successor of another of Alexander's four captains. The Jews were at that time subject to the power of Antiochus; and he, being enraged against them, long strove to his utmost utterly to destroy them, and root them out; at least all of them that would not forsake their religion and worship his idols: and he did indeed in a great measure waste the country, and depopulate the city of Jerusalem; and profaned the temple, by setting up his idols in some parts of it; and persecuted the people with insatiable cruelty; so that we have no account of any persecution like his before. Many of the particular circumstances of this persecution would be very affecting, if I had time to insist on them. This cruel persecution began about a hundred and seventy years before Christ. It is much spoken of in the prophecy of Daniel, as you may see, Dan. viii. 9—25, xi. 31—38. These persecutions are also spoken of in the New Testament, as Heb. xi. 36, 37, 38.

Antiochus intended not only to extirpate the Jewish religion, but, as far as in him lay, the very nation; and particularly labored to the utmost to destroy all copies of the law. And considering how weak they were, in comparison with a king of such vast dominion, the providence of God appears very wonderful in defeating his design. Many times the Jews seemed to be on the very

brink of ruin, and just ready to be wholly swallowed up: their enemies often thought themselves sure of obtaining their purpose. They once came against the people with a mighty army, and with a design of killing all, except the women and children, and of selling these for slaves; and they were so confident of obtaining their purpose, and others of purchasing, that above a thousand merchants came with the army, with money in their hands, to buy the slaves that should be sold. But God wonderfully stirred up and assisted one Judas, and others his successors, that were called the Maccabees, who, with a small handful in comparison, vanquished their enemies time after time, and delivered their nation; which was foretold by Daniel, xi. 32. Speaking of Antiochus's persecution, he says, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God, shall be strong, and do exploits."

God afterwards brought this Antiochus to a fearful, miserable end, by a loathsome disease, under dreadful torments of body, and horrors of mind; which was foretold, Dan. xi. 45, in these words, "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

After his death, there were attempts still to destroy the church of God; but God baffled them all.

XVII. The next thing to be taken notice of is the destruction of the Grecian empire, and setting up of the Roman empire. This was the fourth overturning of the world that was in this period. And though it was brought to pass more gradually than the setting up of the Grecian empire, yet it far exceeded that, and was much the greatest and largest temporal monarchy that ever was in the world; so that the Roman empire was commonly called *all the world;* as it is in Luke ii. 1: "And there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed;" i. e., all the Roman empire.

This empire is spoken of as much the strongest and greatest of any of the four: Dan. ii. 40, "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces, and bruise." So also Dan. vii. 7, 19, 23.

The time that the Romans first conquered and brought under the land of Judea, was between sixty and seventy years before Christ was born. And soon after this, the Roman empire was established in its greatest extent; and the world continued subject to this empire henceforward till Christ came, and many hundred years afterwards.

The nations of the world being united in one monarchy when Christ came, and when the apostles went forth to preach the gospel, did greatly prepare the way for the spreading of the gospel, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world. For the world being thus subject to one government, it opened a communication from nation to nation, and so opportunity was given for the more swiftly propagating the gospel through the world. Thus we find it to be now; as if any thing prevails in the English nation, the communication is quick from one part of the nation to another, throughout all parts that are subject to the English government, much easier and quicker than to other nations, which are not subject to the English government, and have little to do with them. There are innumerable difficulties in travelling through different nations, that are under different independent governments, which there are not in travelling through different parts of the same realm, or different dominions of the same prince. So the world being under one government, the government of the Romans, in Christ's and the apostles' times, facilitated the apostles' travelling, and the gospel's spreading through the world

XVIII. About the same time learning and philosophy were risen to their greatest height in the Heathen world. The time of learning's flourishing in the Heathen world was principally in this period. Almost all the famous philosophers that we have an account of among the Heathen, were after the captivity into Babylon. Almost all the wise men of Greece and Rome flourished in this time. These philosophers, many of them, were indeed men of great temporal wisdom; and that which they in general chiefly professed to make their business, was to inquire wherein men's chief happiness lay, and the way in which men might obtain happiness. They seemed earnestly to busy themselves in this inquiry, and wrote multitudes of books about it, many of which are still extant. And they were exceedingly divided in their opinions about it. There have been reckoned up several hundreds of different opinions that they had concerning it. Thus they wearied themselves in vain, wandered in the dark, not having the glorious gospel to guide them. God was pleased to suffer men to do the utmost that they could with human wisdom, and to try the extent of their own understandings to find out the way to happiness, before the true light came to enlighten the world; before he sent the great Prophet to lead men in the right way to happiness. God suffered these great philosophers to try what they could do for six hundred years together; and then it proved, by the events of so long a time, that all they could do was in vain; the world not becoming wiser, better, or happier under their instructions, but growing more and more foolish, wicked, and miserable. He suffered their wisdom and philosophy to come to the greatest height before Christ came, that it might be seen how far reason and philosophy could go in their highest ascent, that the necessity of a divine teacher might appear before Christ came. And God was pleased to make foolish the wisdom of this world, and show men the folly of their best wisdom, by the doctrines of this glorious gospel, which were above the reach of all their philosophy. See 1 Cor. i. 19, 20, 21.

And after God had showed the vanity of human learning, when set up in the room of the gospel, God was pleased to make it subservient to the purposes of Christ's kingdom, as a handmaid to divine revelation; and so the prevailing of learning in the world before Christ came, made way for his coming both these ways, viz., as thereby the vanity of human wisdom was shown, and the necessity of the gospel appeared; and also as hereby a handmaid was prepared to the gospel; for so it was made use of in the Apostle Paul, who was famed for his much learning, as you may see Acts xxvi. 24, and was skilled not only in the learning of the Jews, but also of the philosophers; and improved it to the purposes of the gospel; as you may see he did in disputing with the philosophers at Athens, Acts xvii. 22, &c. He by his learning knew how to accommodate himself in his discourses to learned men, as appears by this discourse of his: and he knew well how to improve what he had read in their writings; and he here cites their own poets. And now Dionysius, that was a philosopher, was converted by him, and, as ecclesiastical history gives us an account, made a great instrument of promoting the gospel. And there were many others in that and the following ages, who were eminently useful by their human learning in promoting the interests of Christ's kingdom.

XIX. Just before Christ was born, the Roman empire was raised to its greatest height, and also settled in peace. About four and twenty years before Christ was born, Augustus Cæsar, the first Roman emperor, began to rule as emperor of the world. Till then the Roman empire had of a long time been a commonwealth, under the government of the senate: but then it became an absolute monarchy. This Augustus Cæsar, as he was the first, so he was the

greatest of all the Roman emperors: he reigned in the greatest glory. Thus the power of the heathen world, which was Satan's visible kingdom, was raised to its greatest height, after it had been rising higher and higher, and strengthening itself more and more from the days of Solomon to this day, which was about a *thousand years*. Now it appeared at a greater height than ever it appeared from the first beginning of Satan's heathenish kingdom, which was probably about the time of the building of Babel. Now the heathen world was in its greatest glory for strength, wealth, and learning.

God did two things to prepare the way for Christ's coming, wherein he took a contrary method from that which human wisdom would have taken. He brought his own visible people very low, and made them weak; but the heathen, that were his enemies, he exalted to the greatest height, for the more glorious triumph of the cross of Christ. With a small number, in their greatest weakness, he conquered his enemies in their greatest glory. Thus Christ triumphed over principalities and powers in his cross.

Augustus Cæsar had been for many years establishing the state of the Roman empire, subduing his enemies in one part and another, till the very year that Christ was born; when, all his enemies being subdued, his dominion over the world seemed to be settled in its greatest glory. All was established in peace, in token whereof the Romans shut the temple of Janus, which was an established symbol among them of there being universal peace throughout the Roman empire. And this universal peace, which was begun that year that Christ was born, lasted twelve years, till the year that Christ disputed with the doctors in the temple.

Thus the world, after it had been, as it were, in a continual convulsion for so many hundred years together, like the four winds striving together on the tumultuous raging ocean, whence arose those four great monarchies, being now established in the greatest height of the fourth and last monarchy, and settled in quietness; now all things are ready for the birth of Christ. This remarkable universal peace, after so many ages of tumult and war, was a fit prelude for the ushering of the glorious Prince of Peace into the world.

Thus I have gone through the first grand period of the whole space between the fall of man and the end of the world, viz., that from the fall to the time of the incarnation of Christ, and have shown the truth of the first proposition, viz., that *from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ*, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming, and were forerunners of it.

IMPROVEMENT.

Before I proceed to the next proposition, I would make some few remarks, by way of improvement, upon what has been said under this.

I. From what has been said, we may strongly argue, that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; and so that the Christian religion is the true religion, seeing that Christ is the very person so evidently pointed at, in all the great dispensations of Divine Providence, from the fall of man, and was so undoubtedly in so many instances foretold from age to age, and shadowed forth in a vast variety of types and figures. If we seriously consider the course of things from the beginning, and observe the motions of all the great wheels of Providence from one age to another, we shall discern that they all tend hither. They are all as so many lines, whose course, if it be observed and accurately followed, it will be found that every one cen-

ures here. It is so very plain in many things, that it would argue stupidity to deny it. This therefore is undeniable, that this person is a divine person, sent from God, that came into the world with his commission and authority, to do his work, and to declare his mind. The great Governor of the world, in all his great works before and since the flood, to Jews and Gentiles, down to the time of Christ's birth, has declared it. It cannot be any vain imagination, but a plain and evident truth, that that person that was born at Bethlehem, and dwelt at Nazareth, and at Capernaum, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, must be the great Messiah, or anointed of God. And blessed are all they that believe in, and confess him, and miserable are all that deny him. This shows the unreasonableness of the Deists, who deny revealed religion, and of the Jews, who deny that this Jesus is the Messiah foretold and promised to their fathers.

Here it may be some persons may be ready to object, and say, That it may be, some subtle, cunning men contrived this history, and these prophecies, so that they should all point to Jesus Christ on purpose to confirm it, that he is the Messiah. To such it may be replied, How could such a thing be contrived by cunning men to point to Jesus Christ, long before he ever was born? How could they know that ever any such person would be born? And how could their craft and subtlety help them to foresee and point at an event that was to come to pass many ages afterwards? For no fact can be more evident, than that the Jews had those writings long before Christ was born, as they have them still in great veneration, wherever they are, in all their dispersions through the world; and they would never have received such a contrivance from Christians, to point to and confirm Jesus to be the Messiah, whom they always denied to be the Messiah; and much less would they have been made to believe that they always had had those books in their hands, when they were first made and imposed upon them.

II. What has been said affords a strong argument for the divine authority of the books of the Old Testament, from that admirable harmony there is in them, whereby they all point to the same thing. For we may see by what has been said, how all the parts of the Old Testament, though written by so many different penmen, and in ages distant one from another, do all harmonize one with another; all agree in one, and all centre in the same thing, and that a future thing; an event which it was impossible any one of them should know but by divine revelation, even the future coming of Christ. This is most evident and manifest in them, as appears by what has been said.

Now, if the Old Testament was not inspired by God, what account can be given of such an agreement? For if these books were only human writings, written without any divine direction, then none of these penmen knew that there would come such a person as Jesus Christ into the world; his coming was only a mere figment of their own brain; and if so, how happened it, that this figment of theirs came to pass? How came a vain imagination of theirs, which they foretold without any manner of ground for their prediction, to be so exactly fulfilled? And especially how did they come all to agree in it, all pointing exactly to the same thing, though many of them lived so many hundred years distant one from another?

This admirable consent and agreement in a future event, is therefore a clear and certain evidence of the divine authority of those writings.

III. Hence we may learn what a weak and ignorant objection it is that some make against some parts of the Old Testament's being the word of God, that they consist so much of histories of the wars and civil transactions of the

kings and people of the nation of the Jews. Some say, we find here among the books of a particular nation, histories which they kept of the state of their nation, from one age to another; histories of their kings and rulers, histories of their wars with the neighboring nations, and histories of the changes that happen from time to time in their state and government; and so we find that other nations used to keep histories of their public affairs, as well as they; and why then should we think that these histories which the Jews kept are the word of God, more than those of other people? But what has been said, shows the folly and vanity of such an objection. For hereby it appears that the case of these histories is very different from that of all other histories. This history alone gives us an account of the first original of all things; and this history alone deduces things down in a wonderful series from that original, giving an idea of the grand scheme of divine Providence, as tending to its great end. And together with the doctrines and prophecies contained in it, the same book gives a view of the whole series of the great events of divine Providence, from the first original to the last end and consummation of all things, giving an excellent and glorious account of the wise and holy designs of the governor of the world in all.

No common history has such penmen as this history, which was all written by men who came with evident signs and testimonies of their being prophets of the most high God, immediately inspired.

And the histories that were written, as we have seen from what has been said under this proposition, do all contain those great events of Providence, by which it appears how God has been carrying on the glorious divine work of redemption from age to age. Though they are histories, yet they are no less full of divine instruction, and of these things that show forth Christ and his glorious gospel, than other parts of the holy Scriptures, which are not historical.

To object against a book's being divine, merely because it is historical, is a poor objection; just as if that could not be the word of God which gives an account of what is past; or as though it were not reasonable to suppose, that God, in a revelation he should give mankind, would give us any relation of the dispensations of his own providence. If it be so, it must be because his works are not worthy to be related; it must be because the scheme of his government, and series of his dispensations towards his church, and towards the world that he has made, whereby he has ordered and disposed it from age to age, is not worthy that any record should be kept of it.

The objection that is made, that it is a common thing for nations and kingdoms to write histories and keep records of their wars, and the revolutions that come to pass in their territories, is so far from being a weighty objection against the historical part of Scripture, as though it were not the word of God, that it is a strong argument in favor of it. For if reason and the light of nature teaches all civilized nations to keep records of the events of their human government, and the series of their administrations, and to publish histories for the information of others; how much more may we expect that God would give the world a record of the dispensations of his divine government, which doubtless is infinitely more worthy of a history for our information? If wise kings have taken care that there should be good histories written of the nations over which they have reigned, shall we think it incredible, that Jesus Christ should take care that his church, which is his nation, his peculiar people, should have in their hands a certain infallible history of their nation, and of his government of them?

If it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, how wofully should

we have been left in the dark about many things which the church of God needs to know! How ignorant should we have been of God's dealings towards mankind, and towards his church, from the beginning! And we should have been wholly in the dark about the creation of the world, the fall of man, the first rise and continued progress of the dispensations of grace towards fallen mankind! And we should have known nothing how God at first set up a church in the world and how it was preserved; after what manner he governed it from the beginning; how the light of the gospel first began to dawn in the world; how it increased, and how things were preparing for the coming of Christ.

If we are Christians, we belong to that building of God that has been the subject of our discourse from this text: but if it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, we should never have known what was the first occasion of God's going about this building, and how the foundation of it was laid at first, and how it has gone on from the beginning. The times of the history of the Old Testament are mostly times that no other history reaches up to; and therefore, if God had not taken care to give and preserve an account of these things for us, we should have been wholly without them.

Those that object against the authority of the Old Testament history of the nation of the Jews, may as well make it an objection against Moses's account of the creation, that it is historical; for in the other, we have a history of a work no less important, viz., the work of redemption. Yea, this is a far greater and more glorious work, as we observed before; that if it be inquired which of the two works, the work of creation or the work of providence, is greatest; it must be answered, the work of providence; but the work of redemption is the greatest of the works of providence.

And let those who make this objection consider what part of the Old Testament history can be spared without making a great breach in that thread or series of events by which this glorious work has been carried on. This leads me to observe,

IV. That, from what has been said, we may see much of the wisdom of God in the composition of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, i. e., in the parts of which it consists. By what has been said, we may see that God hath wisely given us such revelations in the Old Testament as we needed. Let us briefly take a view of the several parts of it, and of the need there was of them.

Thus it was necessary that we should have some account of the creation of the world, and of our first parents, and of the fall, and a brief account of the old world, and of the degeneracy of it, and of the universal deluge, and some account of the origin of nations after this destruction of mankind.

It seems necessary that there should be some account of the succession of the church of God from the beginning: and seeing God suffered all the world to degenerate, and only took one nation to be his people, to preserve the true worship and religion till the Saviour of the world should come, that in them the world might gradually be prepared for that great light, and those wonderful things that he was to be the author of, and that they might be a typical nation, and that in them God might shadow forth and teach, as under a veil, all future glorious things of the gospel; it was therefore necessary that we should have some account of this thing, how it was first done by the calling of Abraham, and by their bond-slaves in Egypt, and how they were brought to Canaan. It was necessary that we should have some account of the revelation which God made of himself to that people, in giving their law, and in the appointment of

their typical worship, and those things wherein the gospel is veiled, and of the forming of that people, both as to their civil and ecclesiastical state.

It seems exceeding necessary that we should have some account of their being actually brought to Canaan, the country that was their promised land, and where they always dwelt. It seems very necessary that we should have a history of the successions of the church of Israel, and of those providences of God towards them, which were most considerable and fullest of gospel mystery. It seems necessary that we should have some account of the highest promised external glory of that nation under David and Solomon, and that we should have a very particular account of David, whose history is so full of the gospel, and so necessary in order to introduce the gospel into the world, and in whom began the race of their kings; and that we should have some account of the building of the temple, which was also so full of gospel mystery.

And it is a matter of great consequence, that we should have some account of Israel's dividing from Judah, and of the ten tribes' captivity and utter rejection, and a brief account why, and therefore a brief history of them till that time. It is necessary that we should have an account of the succession of the kings of Judah, and of the church, till their captivity into Babylon; and that we should have some account of their return from their captivity, and resettlement in their own land, and of the origin of the last state that the church was in before Christ came.

A little consideration will convince every one, that all these things were necessary, and that none of them could be spared; and in the general, that it was necessary that we should have a history of God's church till such times as are within the reach of human histories; and it was of vast importance that we should have an inspired history of those times of the Jewish church, wherein there was kept up a more extraordinary intercourse between God and them, and while he used to dwell among them as it were visibly, revealing himself by the Shechinah, by Urim and Thummim, and by prophecy, and so more immediately to order their affairs. And it was necessary that we should have some account of the great dispensations of God in prophecy, which were to be after the finishing of inspired history; and so it was exceeding suitable and needful that there should be a number of prophets raised up who should foretell the coming of the Son of God, and the nature and glory of his kingdom, to be as so many harbingers to make way for him, and that their prophecies should remain in the church.

It was also a matter of great consequence that the church should have a book of divine songs given by inspiration from God, wherein there should be a lively representation of the true spirit of devotion, of faith, hope, and divine love, joy, resignation, humility, obedience, repentance, &c.; and also that we should have from God such books of moral instructions as we have in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, relating to the affairs and state of mankind, and the concerns of human life, containing rules of true wisdom and prudence for our conduct in all circumstances; and that we should have particularly a song representing the great love between Christ and his spouse the church, particularly adapted to the disposition and holy affections of a true Christian soul towards Christ, and representing his grace and marvellous love to, and delight in his people; as we have in Solomon's Song; and especially that we should have a book to teach us how to conduct ourselves under affliction, seeing the church of God here is in a militant state, and God's people do, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of heaven; and the church is for so long a time under trouble, and meets with such exceedingly fiery trials, and extreme sufferings

before her time of peace and rest in the latter ages of the world shall come: therefore God has given us a book most proper in these circumstances, even the book of Job, written upon occasion of the afflictions of a particular saint and was probably at first given to the church in Egypt under her afflictions there; and is made use of by the apostle to comfort Christians under persecutions, James v. 11: "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." God was also pleased, in this book of Job, to give some view of the ancient divinity, before the giving of the law.

Thus, from this brief review, I think it appears that every part of the Scriptures of the Old Testament is very useful and necessary, and no part of it can be spared, without loss to the church. And therefore, as I said, the wisdom of God is conspicuous in ordering that the Scriptures of the Old Testament should consist of those very books of which they do consist.

Before I dismiss this particular, I would add, that it is very observable, that the history of the Old Testament is large and particular, where the great affair of redemption required it; as where there was most done towards this work, and most to typify Christ, and to prepare the way for him. Thus it is very large and particular in the history of Abraham and the other patriarchs; but very short in the account we have of the time which the children of Israel spent in Egypt. So again it is large in the account of the redemption out of Egypt, and the first settling of the affairs of the Jewish church and nation in Moses and Joshua's time; but much shorter in the account of the times of the judges. So again, it is large and particular in the account of David's and Solomon's times, and then very short in the history of the ensuing reigns. Thus the accounts are large or short, just as there is more or less of the affair of redemption to be seen in them.

V. From what has been said, we may see, that Christ and his redemption are the great subject of the whole Bible. Concerning the New Testament, the matter is plain; and by what has been said on this subject hitherto, it appears to be so also with respect to the Old Testament. Christ and his redemption is the great subject of the prophecies of the Old Testament, as has been shown. It has also been shown, that he is the great subject of the songs of the Old Testament; and the moral rules and precepts are all given in subordination to him. And Christ and his redemption are also the great subject of the history of the Old Testament, from the beginning all along; and even the history of the creation is brought in, as an introduction to the history of redemption that immediately follows it. The whole book, both Old Testament and New, is filled up with the gospel; only with this difference, that the Old Testament contains the gospel under a veil, but the New contains it unveiled, so that we may see the glory of the Lord with open face.

VI. By what has been said, we may see the usefulness and excellency of the Old Testament. Some are ready to look on the Old Testament as being, as it were, out of date, and as if we, in these days of the gospel, have but little to do with it; which is a very great mistake, arising from the want of observing the nature and design of the Old Testament, which, if it were observed, would appear full of the gospel of Christ, and would in an excellent manner illustrate and confirm the glorious doctrines and promises of the New Testament. Those parts of the Old Testament which are commonly looked upon as containing the least divine instruction, are as it were mines and treasures of gospel knowledge; and the reason why they are thought to contain so little, is, because persons do but superficially read them. The treasures which are hid

underneath are not observed. They only look on the top of the ground, and so suddenly pass a judgment that there is nothing there. But they never dig into the mine: if they did, they would find it richly stored with silver and gold, and would be abundantly requited for their pains.

What has been said, may show us what a precious treasure God has committed into our hands, in that he has given us the Bible. How little do most persons consider, how much they enjoy, in that they have the possession of that holy book the Bible, which they have in their hands, and may converse with it as they please. What an excellent book is this, and how far exceeding all human writings, that reveals God to us, and gives us a view of the grand design and glorious scheme of Providence from the beginning of the world, either in history or prophecy; that reveals the great Redeemer and his glorious redemption, and the various steps by which God accomplishes it from the first foundation to the topstone! Shall we prize a history which gives us a clear account of some great earthly prince, or mighty warrior, as of Alexander the Great, or Julius Cesar, or the Duke of Marlborough? And shall we not prize the history that God gives us of the glorious kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ, the Prince and Saviour, and of the wars and other great transactions of that King of kings, and Lord of armies, the Lord mighty in battle? The history of the things which he has wrought for the redemption of his chosen people?

VII. What has been said, may make us sensible how much most persons are to blame for their inattentive, unobservant way of reading the Scriptures. How much do the Scriptures contain, if it were but observed! The Bible is the most comprehensive book in the world. But what will all this signify to us, if we read it without observing what is the drift of the Holy Ghost in it? The Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 18, begs of God, "that he would enlighten his eyes, that he might behold wondrous things out of his law." The Scriptures are full of wondrous things. Those histories which are commonly read as if they were only histories of the private concerns of such and such particular persons, such as the histories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and the history of Ruth, and the histories of particular lawgivers and princes, as the history of Joshua and the Judges, and David, and the Israelitish princes, are accounts of vastly greater things, things of greater importance, and more extensive concernment, than they that read them are commonly aware of.

The histories of Scripture are commonly read as if they were stories written only to entertain men's fancies, and to while away their leisure hours, when the infinitely great things contained or pointed at in them are passed over and never taken notice of. Whatever treasures the Scriptures contain, we shall be never the better for them if we do not observe them. He that has a Bible, and does not observe what is contained in it, is like a man who has a box full of silver and gold, and does not know it, does not observe that it is any thing more than a vessel filled with common stones. As long as it is thus with him, he will be never the better for his treasure: for he that knows not that he has a treasure, will never make use of what he has, and so might as well be without it. He who has a plenty of the choicest food stored up in his house, and does not know it, will never taste what he has, and will be as likely to starve as if his house were empty.

VIII. What has been said, may show us how great a person Jesus Christ is, and how great an errand he came into the world upon, seeing there was so much done to prepare the way for his coming. God had been doing nothing else but prepare the way for his coming, and doing the work which he had to do in the world, through all ages of the world from the very beginning. If

we had notice of a certain stranger's being about to come into a country, and should observe that a great preparation was made for his coming, that many months were taken up in it, and great things were done, many great alterations were made in the state of the whole country, and that many hands were employed, and persons of great note were engaged in making preparation for the coming of this person, and the whole country was overturned, and all the affairs and concerns of the country were ordered so as to be subservient to the design of entertaining that person when he should come; it would be natural for us to think with ourselves, why, surely, this person is some extraordinary person indeed, and it is some very great business that he is coming upon.

How great a person then must he be, for whose coming into the world the great God of heaven and earth, and governor of all things, spent four thousand years in preparing the way, going about it soon after the world was created, and from age to age doing great things, bringing mighty events to pass, accomplishing wonders without number, often overturning the world in order to it, and causing every thing in the state of mankind, and all revolutions and changes in the habitable world from generation to generation to be subservient to this great design! Surely this must be some great and extraordinary person indeed, and a great work indeed it must needs be that he is coming bout.

We read, Matt. xxi. 8, 9, 10, that when Christ was coming into Jerusalem, and the multitudes ran before him and cut down branches of palm trees, and strewed them in the way, and others spread their garments in the way, and cried, "Hosannah to the son of David," that the whole city was moved, saying, Who is this? They wondered who that extraordinary person should be, that there should be such an ado made on occasion of his coming into the city, and to prepare the way before him. But if we consider what has been said on this subject, what great things were done in all ages to prepare the way for Christ's coming into the world, and how the world was often overturned to make way for it, much more may we cry out, Who is this? What great person is this? And say, as in Psal. xxiv. 8, 10, "Who is this King of glory," that God should show such respect, and put such vast honor upon him? Surely this person is honorable indeed in God's eyes, and greatly beloved of him; and surely it is a great errand upon which he is sent into the world.

PERIOD II.

HAVING shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the first period, from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, I come now to the second period, viz., the time of Christ's humiliation, or the space from the incarnation of Christ to his resurrection. And this is the most remarkable article of time that ever was or ever will be.—Though it was but between thirty and forty years, yet more was done in it than had been done from the beginning of the world to that time. We have observed, that all that had been done from the fall to the incarnation of Christ, was only preparatory for what was done now. And it may also be observed, that all that was done before the beginning of time, in the eternal counsels of God. and that eternal transaction there was between the persons of the Trinity, chiefly respected this period. We therefore now proceed to consider the *second proposition*, viz.,

That during the time of Christ's humliation, from his incarnation to his resurrection, the purchase of redemption was made.

Though there were many things done in the affair of redemption from the fall of man to this time, though millions of sacrifices had been offered up; yet nothing was done to purchase redemption before Christ's incarnation: no part of the purchase was made, no part of the price was offered till now. But as soon as Christ was incarnate, then the purchase began immediately without any delay. And the whole time of Christ's humiliation, from the morning that Christ began to be incarnate, till the morning that he rose from the dead, was taken up in this purchase. And then the purchase was entirely and completely finished. As nothing was done before Christ's incarnation, so nothing was done after his resurrection, to purchase redemption for men. Nor will there ever be any thing more done to all eternity. But that very moment that the human nature of Christ ceased to remain under the power of death, the utmost farthing was paid of the price of the salvation of every one of the elect.

But for the more orderly and regular consideration of the great things done by our Redeemer to purchase redemption for us,

1. I would speak of Christ's becoming incarnate to capacitate himself for his purchase;—and,

2. I would speak of the purchase itself.

PART I.

First, I would consider Christ's coming into the world, or his taking upon him our nature to put himself in a capacity to purchase redemption for u Christ became incarnate, or, which is the same thing, became man, to put himself in a capacity for working out our redemption: for though Christ, as God, was infinitely sufficient for the work, yet to his being in an immediate capacity for it, it was needful that he should not only be God, but man. If Christ had remained only in the divine nature, he would not have been in a capacity to have purchased our salvation; not from any imperfection of the divine nature, but by reason of its absolute and infinite perfection: for Christ, merely as God, was not capable either of that obedience or suffering that was needful. The divine nature is not capable of suffering; for it is infinitely above all suffering. Neither is it capable of obedience to that law that was given to man. It is as impossible that one who is only God, should obey the law that was given to man, as it is that he should suffer man's punishment.

And it was necessary not only that Christ should take upon him a created nature, but that he should take upon him our nature. It would not have sufficed for us for Christ to have become an angel, and to have obeyed and suffer ed in the angelic nature. But it was necessary that he should become a man, and that upon three accounts.

1. *It was needful to answer the law, that that nature should obey the law, to which the law was given.* Man's law could not be answered, but by being obeyed by man. God insisted upon it, that the law which he had given to man should be honored and submitted to, and fulfilled by the nature of man, otherwise the law could not be answered for men. The words that were spo-

ken, Thou shalt not eat thereof, Thou shalt, or thou shalt not, do thus or thus were spoken to the race of mankind, to the human nature; and therefore the human nature must fulfil them.

2. *It was needful to answer the law, that the nature that sinned should die.* These words, "Thou shalt surely die," respect the human nature. The same nature to which the command was given, was the nature to which the threatening was directed.

3. *God saw meet, that the same world which was the stage of man's fall and ruin, should also be the stage of his redemption.* We read often of his coming into the world to save sinners, and of God's sending him into the world for this purpose. It was needful that he should come into this sinful, miserable, undone world, to restore and save it. In order to man's recovery, it was needful that he should come down to man, to the world that was man's proper habitation, and that he should tabernacle with us: John i. 14, "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Concerning the incarnation of Christ, I would observe these following things.

I. The incarnation itself; in which especially two things are to be considered, viz.

1. His conception, which was in the womb of one of the race of mankind, whereby he became truly the Son of man, as he was often called. He was one of the posterity of Adam, and a child of Abraham, and a son of David, according to God's promise But his conception was not in the way of ordinary generation, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ was formed in the womb of the Virgin, of the substance of her body, by the power of the Spirit of God. So that he was the immediate son of the woman, but not the immediate son of any male whatsoever; and so was the seed of the woman, and the son of a virgin, one that had never known man.

2. His birth.—Though the conception of Christ was supernatural, yet after he was conceived, and so the incarnation of Christ begun, his human nature was gradually perfected in the womb of the virgin, in a way of natural progress; and so his birth was in the way of nature. But his conception being supernatural, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he was both conceived and born without sin.

II. The second thing I would observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, is the fulness of the time in which it was accomplished. It was after things had been preparing for it from the very first fall of mankind, and when all things were ready. It came to pass at a time, which in infinite wisdom was the most fit and proper: Gal. iv. 4, "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

It was now the most proper time on every account. Any time before the flood would not have been so fit a time. For then the mischief and ruin that the fall brought on mankind, was not so fully seen. The curse did not so fully come on the earth before the flood, as it did afterwards: for though the ground was cursed in a great measure before, yet it pleased God that the curse should once, before the restoration by Christ, be executed in a universal destruction, as it were, of the very form of the earth, that the dire effects of the fall might once in such a way be seen before the recovery by Christ. Though mankind were mortal before the flood, yet their lives were the greater part of a thousand years in length, a kind of immortality in comparison with what the life of man is now. It pleased God, that that curse, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," should have its full accomplishment, and be executed in its

greatest degree on mankind, before the Redeemer came to purchase a never ending life for man.

It would not have been so fit a time for Christ to come, after the flood, before Moses's time: for till then mankind were not so universally apostatized from the true God; they were not fallen universally into Heathenish darkness; and so the need of Christ, the light of the world, was not so evident: and the woful consequence of the fall with respect to man's mortality, was not so fully manifest till then; for man's life was not so shortened as to be reduced to the present standard till about Moses's time.

It was most fit that the time of the Messiah's coming should not be till many ages after Moses's time; till all nations, but the children of Israel, had lain long in Heathenish darkness; that the remedilessness of their disease might by long experience be seen, and so the absolute necessity of the heavenly physician, before he came.

Another reason why Christ did not come soon after the flood probably was, that the earth might be full of people, that Christ might have the more extensive kingdom, and that the effects of his light, and power, and grace, might be glorified, and that his victory over Satan might be attended with the more glory in the multitude of his conquests. It was also needful that the coming of Christ should be many ages after Moses, that the church might be prepared which was formed by Moses for his coming, by the Messiah's being long prefigured, and by his being many ways foretold, and by his being long expected. It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonish captivity, because Satan's kingdom was not then come to the height. The Heathen world before that consisted of lesser kingdoms. But God saw meet that the Messiah should come in the time of one of the four great monarchies of the world. Nor was it proper that he should come in the time of the Babylonish monarchy; for it was God's will that several general monarchies should follow one another, and that the coming of the Messiah should be in the time of the last, which appeared above them all. The Persian monarchy, by overcoming the Babylonian, appeared above it: and so the Grecian, by overcoming the Persian, appeared above *that;* and for the same reason, the Roman above the Grecian. Now it was the will of God, that his Son should make his appearance in the world in the time of this greatest and strongest monarchy, which was Satan's visible kingdom in the world; that, by overcoming this, he might visibly overcome Satan's kingdom in its greatest strength and glory, and so obtain the more complete triumph over Satan himself.

It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonish captivity. For, before that, we have not histories of the state of the Heathen world, to give us an idea of the need of a Saviour. And besides, before that, learning did not much flourish, and so there had not been an opportunity to show the insufficiency of human learning and wisdom to reform and save mankind. Again, before that, the Jews were not dispersed over the world, as they were afterwards; and so things were not prepared in this respect for the coming of Christ. The necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation was not then so apparent as it was afterwards, by reason of the dispersion of the Jews; neither was the way prepared for the propagation of the gospel, as it was afterwards, by the same dispersion. Many other things might be mentioned, by which it would appear, that no other time before that very time in which Christ did come, would have been proper for his appearing in the world to purchase the redemption of men.

III. The next thing that I would observe concerning the incarnation of

Christ, is the greatness of this event. Christ's incarnation was a greater and more wonderful thing than ever had come to pass; and there has been but one that has ever come to pass which was greater, and that was the death of Christ, which was afterwards. But Christ's incarnation was a greater thing than had ever come to pass before. The creation of the world was a very great thing, but not so great a thing as the incarnation of Christ. It was a great thing for God to make the creature, but not so great as for God, as for the Creator himself, to become a creature. We have spoken of many great things that were accomplished from one age to another, in the ages between the fall of man and the incarnation of Christ: but God's becoming man was a greater thing than they all. When Christ was born, the greatest person was born that ever was, or ever will be born.

IV. What I would next observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, are the remarkable circumstances of it; such as his being born of a poor virgin, that was a pious, holy person, but poor, as appeared by her offering at her purification: Luke ii. 24, "And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons." Which refers to Lev. v. 7, "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtle doves, or two young pigeons." And this poor virgin was espoused to a husband who was a poor man. Though they were both of the royal family of David, the most honorable family, and Joseph was the rightful heir to the crown; yet the family was reduced to a very low state; which is represented by the tabernacle of David's being fallen or broken down: Amos ix. 11, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old."

He was born in the town of Bethlehem, as was foretold: and there was a very remarkable providence of God to bring about the fulfilment of this prophecy, the taxing of all the world by Augustus Cæser, as in Luke ii. He was born in a very low condition, even in a stable, and laid in a manger.

V. I would observe the concomitants of this great event, or the remarkable events with which it was attended.—And,

1. The first thing I would take notice of that attended the incarnation of Christ, was the return of the *Spirit*; which indeed began a little before the incarnation of Christ; but yet was given on occasion of that, as it was to reveal either his birth, or the birth of his forerunner John the Baptist. I have before observed how the spirit of prophecy ceased, not long after the book of Malachi was written From about the same time, visions and immediate revelations ceased also. But now, on this occasion, they are granted anew, and the Spirit in these operations returns again. The first instance of its restoration that we have any account of is in the vision of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist; which we read of in the 1st chapter of Luke. The text is in the vision which the Virgin Mary had, of which we read also in the same chapter. The third is in the vision which Joseph had, of which we read in the 1st chapter of Matthew. In the next place, the Spirit was given to Elisabeth, Luke i. 41. Next, it was given to Mary, as appears by her song, Luke i. 46, &c. Then to Zacharias again, ver. 64. Then it was sent to the shepherds, of which we have an account in Luke ii. 9. Then it was given to Simeon, Luke ii. 25. Then to Anna, ver. 36. Then to the wise men in the east. Then to Joseph again, directing him to flee into Egypt, and after that directing his return.

2. The next concomitant of Christ's incarnation that I would observe is, the great notice that was taken of it in heaven, and on earth. How it was noticed

by the glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world, appears by their joyful songs on this occasion, heard by the shepherds in the night. This was the greatest event of Providence that ever the angels had beheld. We read of their singing praises when they saw the formation of this lower world: Job xxxviii 7, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." And as they sang praises then, so they do now, on this much greater occasion, of the birth of the Son of God, who is the Creator of the world.

The glorious angels had all along expected this event.—They had taken great notice of the prophecies and promises of these things all along: for we are told, that the angels desire to look into the affairs of redemption, 1 Pet. i. 12. They had all along been the ministers of Christ in this affair of redemption, in all the several steps of it down from the very fall of man. So we read, that they were employed in God's dealings with Abraham, and in his dealings with Jacob, and in his dealings with the Israelites from time to time And doubtless they had long joyfully expected the coming of Christ; but now they see it accomplished, and therefore greatly rejoice, and sing praises on this occasion.

Notice was taken of it by some among the Jews; as particularly by Elisabeth and the Virgin Mary, before the birth of Christ; not to say by John the Baptist before he was born, when he leaped in his mother's womb as it were for joy, at the voice of the salutation of Mary. But Elisabeth and Mary do most joyfully praise God together, when they meet with Christ and his forerunner in their wombs, and the Holy Spirit in their souls. And afterwards what joyful notice is taken of this event by the shepherds, and by those holy persons, Zacharias, and Simeon, and Anna! How do they praise God on this occasion! Thus the church of God in heaven, and the church on earth, do as it were unite in their joy and praise on this occasion.

Notice was taken of it by the Gentiles, which appears in the wise men of the east. Great part of the universe does as it were take a joyful notice of the incarnation of Christ. Heaven takes notice of it, and the inhabitants sing for joy. This lower world, the world of mankind, does also take notice of it in both parts of it, Jews and Gentiles. It pleased God to put honor on his Son, by wonderfully stirring up some of the wisest of the Gentiles to come a long journey to see and worship the Son of God at his birth, being led by a miraculous star, signifying the birth of that glorious person, who is the bright and morning star, going before, and leading them to the very place where the young child was. Some think they were instructed by the prophecy of Balaam, who dwelt in the eastern parts, and foretold Christ's coming as a star that should rise out of Jacob. Or they might be instructed by that general expectation there was of the Messiah's coming about that time, before spoken of, from the notice they had of it by the prophecies the Jews had of him in their dispersions in all parts of the world at that time.

3. The next concomitant of the birth of Christ was his circumcision. But this may more properly be spoken of under another head, and so I will not insist upon it now.

4. The next concomitant was his first coming into the second temple, which was his being brought thither when an infant, on occasion of the purification of the blessed Virgin.

We read, Hagg. ii. 7, "The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house (or temple) with glory." And in Mal. iii. 1, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant." And now was the first instance of the fulfilment of these prophecies.

5. The last concomitant I shall mention is the sceptre's departing from Judah, in the death of Herod the Great. The sceptre had never totally departed from Judah till now. Judah's sceptre was greatly diminished in the revolt of the ten tribes in Jeroboam's time; and the sceptre departed from Israel or Ephraim at the time of the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. But yet the sceptre remained in the tribe of Judah, under the kings of the house of David. And when the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the sceptre of Judah ceased for a little while, till the return from the captivity under Cyrus: and then, though they were not an independent government, as they had been before, but owed fealty to the kings of Persia; yet their governor was of themselves, who had the power of life and death, and they were governed by their own laws; and so Judah had a lawgiver from between his feet during the Persian and Grecian monarchies. Towards the latter part of the Grecian monarchy, the people were governed by kings of their own, of the race of the Maccabees, for the greater part of a hundred years; and after that they were subdued by the Romans. But yet the Romans suffered them to be governed by their own laws, and to have a king of their own, Herod the Great, who reigned about forty years, and governed with proper kingly authority, only paying homage to the Romans. But presently after Christ was born he died, as we have an account, Matt. ii. 19, and Archelaus succeeded him; but was soon put down by the Roman Emperor; and then the sceptre departed from Judah. There were no more temporal kings of Judah after that, neither had that people their governors from the midst of themselves after that, but were ruled by a Roman governor sent among them; and they ceased any more to have the power of life and death among themselves. Hence the Jews say to Pilate, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death," John xviii. 31 Thus the sceptre departed from Judah when Shiloh came.

PART II.

HAVING thus considered Christ's coming into the world, and his taking on him our nature, to put himself in a capacity for the purchase of redemption, I come NOW, SECONDLY, to speak of the purchase itself.—And in speaking of this I would,

1. Show what is intended by the purchase of redemption.
2. Observe some things in general concerning those things by which this purchase was made.
3. I would orderly consider those things which Christ did and suffered, by which that purchase was made.

SECTION I.

I would show what is here intended by Christ's purchasing redemption And there are two things that are intended by it, viz., his satisfaction, and his merit. All is done by the price that Christ lays down. But the price that Christ laid down does two things: it pays our debt, and so it *satisfies:* by its intrinsic

value, and by the agreement between the Father and the Son, it procures a title to us for happiness, and so it *merits*. The satisfaction of Christ is to free us from misery, and the merit of Christ is to purchase happiness for us.

The word *purchase*, as it is used with respect to the purchase of Christ, is taken either more strictly, or more largely. It is oftentimes used more strictly, to signify only the merit of Christ; and sometimes more largely, to signify both his satisfaction and merit. Indeed most of the words which are used in this affair have various significations. Thus sometimes divines use *merit* in this affair for the whole price that Christ offered, both satisfactory, and also positively meritorious. And so the word *satisfaction* is sometimes used, not only for his propitiation, but also for his meritorious obedience. For in some sense, no only suffering the penalty, but positively obeying, is needful to satisfy the law. The reason of this various use of these terms seems to be, that satisfaction and merit do not differ so much really as relatively. They both consist in paying a valuable price, a price of infinite value; but only that price, as it respects a debt to be paid, is called *satisfaction;* and as it respects a positive good to be obtained, is called *merit*. The difference between paying a debt and making a positive purchase is more relative than it is essential. He who lays down a price to pay a debt, does in some sense make a purchase: he purchases liberty from the obligation. And he who lays down a price to purchase a good, does as it were make satisfaction: he satisfies the conditional demands of him to whom he pays it. This may suffice concerning what is meant by the purchase of Christ.

SECTION II.

I now proceed to some general observations concerning those things by which this purchase was made.—And here,

1. I would observe, that whatever in Christ had the nature of satisfaction, it was by virtue of the suffering or humiliation that was in it. But whatever had the nature of merit, it was by virtue of the obedience or righteousness there was in it. The satisfaction of Christ consists in his answering the demands of the law on man, which were consequent on the breach of the law. These were answered by suffering the penalty of the law. The merit of Christ consists in what he did to answer the demands of the law, which were prior to man's breach of the law, or to fulfil what the law demanded before man sinned, which was obedience.

The satisfaction or propitiation of Christ consists either in his suffering evil, or his being subject to abasement. For Christ did not only make satisfaction by proper suffering, but by whatever had the nature of humiliation, and abasement of circumstances. Thus Christ made satisfaction for sin, by continuing under the power of death, while he lay buried in the grave, though neither his body nor soul properly endured any suffering after he was dead. Whatever Christ was subject to that was the judicial fruit of sin, had the nature of satisfaction for sin. But not only proper suffering, but all abasement and depression of the state and circumstances of mankind below its primitive honor and dignity, such as his body remaining under death, and body and soul remaining separate, and other things that might be mentioned, are the judicial fruits of sin. And all that Christ did in his state of humiliation, that had the nature of obedience or moral virtue or goodness in it, in one respect or another had the

nature of merit in it, and was part of the price with which he purchased happiness for the elect.

2. I would observe, that both Christ's satisfaction for sin, and also his meriting happiness by his righteousness, were carried on through the whole time of his humiliation. Christ's satisfaction for sin was not only by his last sufferings, though it was principally by them; but all his sufferings, and all the humiliation that he was subject to, from the first moment of his incarnation to his resurrection, were propitiatory or satisfactory. Christ's satisfaction was chiefly by his death, because his sufferings and humiliation in that was greatest. But all his other sufferings, and all his other humiliation, all along had the nature of satisfaction. So had the mean circumstances in which he was born. His being born in such a low condition, was to make satisfaction for sin. His being born of a poor virgin, in a stable, and his being laid in a manger; his taking the human nature upon him in its low state, and under those infirmities brought upon it by the fall; his being born in the form of sinful flesh, had the nature of satisfaction. And so all his sufferings in his infancy and childhood, and all that labor, and contempt, and reproach, and temptation, and difficulty of any kind, or that he suffered through the whole course of his life, was of a propitiatory and satisfactory nature.

And so his purchase of happiness by his righteousness was also carried on through the whole time of his humiliation till his resurrection; not only in that obedience he performed through the course of his life, but also in the obedience he performed in laying down his life.

3. It was by the same things that Christ hath satisfied God's justice, and also purchased eternal happiness. This satisfaction and purchase of Christ were not only both carried on through the whole time of Christ's humiliation, but they were both carried on by the same things. He did not make satisfaction by some things that he did, and then work out a righteousness by other different things; but in the same acts by which he wrought out righteousness, he also made satisfaction, but only taken in a different relation. One and the same act of Christ, considered with respect to the obedience there was in it, was part of his righteousness, and purchased heaven: but considered with respect to the self-denial, and difficulty, and humiliation, with which he performed it, had the nature of satisfaction for sin, and procured our pardon. Thus his going about doing good, preaching the gospel, and teaching his disciples, was a part of his righteousness, and purchase of heaven, as it was done in obedience to the Father; and the same was a part of his satisfaction, as he did it with great labor, trouble, and weariness, and under great temptation, exposing himself hereby to reproach and contempt. So his laying down his life had the nature of satisfaction to God's offended justice, considered as his bearing our punishment in our stead: but considered as an act of obedience to God, who had given him this command, that he should lay down his life for sinners, it was a part of his righteousness, and purchase of heaven, and as much the principal part of his righteousness as it was the principal part of his satisfaction. And so to instance in his circumcision, what he suffered in that, had the nature of satisfaction: the blood that was shed in his circumcision was propitiatory blood; but as it was a conformity to the law of Moses, it was part of his meritorious righteousness. Though it was not properly the act of his human nature, he being an infant; yet it being what the human nature was the subject of, and being the act of that person, it was accepted as an act of his obedience as our mediator.

And so even his being born in such a low condition had the nature of satis-

faction, by reason of the humiliation that was in it, and also of righteousness as it was the act of his person in obedience to the Father, and what the human nature was the subject of, and what the will of the human nature did acquiesce in, though there was no act of the will of the human nature prior to it.

These things may suffice to have observed in the general, concerning the purchase Christ made of redemption.

SECTION III.

I now proceed to speak more particularly of those things which Christ did, and was the subject of, during the time of his humiliation, whereby this purchase was made.—And the nature of the purchase of Christ, as it has been explained, leads us to consider these things under a twofold view, viz.

1. With respect to his *righteousness*, which appeared in them.

2. With respect to *the sufferings and humiliation* that he was subject to in them in our stead.

I. I will consider the things that passed during the time of Christ's humiliation, with respect to the *obedience and righteousness* that he exercised in them. And this is subject to a threefold distribution. I shall therefore consider his obedience.

1. With respect to the *laws* which he obeyed.

2. With respect to the *different stages of his life* in which he performed it

3 With respect to the *virtues he exercised* in his obedience.

I. The first distribution of the acts of Christ's righteousness is with respect to *the laws which he obeyed* in that righteousness which he performed. But here it must be observed in general, that all the precepts which Christ obeyed may be reduced to one law, and that is that which the apostle calls *the law of works*, Rom. iii. 27. Every command that Christ obeyed may be reduced to that great and everlasting law of God that is contained in the covenant of works, that eternal rule of right which God had established between himself and mankind. Christ came into the world to fulfil and answer the covenant of works; that is, the covenant that is to stand forever as a rule of judgment; and that is the covenant that we had broken, and that was the covenant that must be fulfilled.

This law of works indeed includes all the laws of God which ever have been given to mankind; for it is a general rule of the law of works, and indeed of the law of nature, that God is to be obeyed, and that he must be submitted to in whatever positive precept he is pleased to give us. It is a rule of the law of works, that men should obey their earthly parents; and it is certainly as much a rule of the same law, that we should obey our heavenly Father: and so the law of works requires obedience to all positive commands of God. It required Adam's obedience to that positive command, not to eat of the forbidden fruit; and it required obedience of the Jews to all the positive commands of their institution. When God commanded Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh, the law of works required him to obey: and so it required Christ's obedience to all the positive commands which God gave him.

But, more particularly, *the commands of God which Christ obeyed*, were of three kinds; they were either such as he was subject to merely *as man*, or such as he was subject to *as he was a Jew*, or such as he was subject to purely *as Mediator*.

1. He obeyed those commands which he was subject to merely as *man*:

and they were the commands of the moral law, which was the same with that which was given at Mount Sinai, written in two tables of stone, which are obligatory on mankind of all nations and all ages of the world

2. He obeyed all those laws he was subject to as he was a *Jew*. Thus he was subject to the ceremonial law, and was conformed to it. He was conformed to it in his being circumcised the eighth day; and he strictly obeyed it in going up to Jerusalem to the temple three times a year; at least after he was come to the age of twelve years, which seems to have been the age when the males began to go up to the temple. And so Christ constantly attended the service of the temple, and of the synagogues.

To this head of his obedience to the law that he was subject to as a Jew, may be reduced his submission to John's baptism. For it was a special command to the Jews, to go forth to John the Baptist, and be baptized of him; and therefore Christ being a Jew, was subject to this command; and therefore when he came to be baptized of John, and John objected, that he had more need to come to him to be baptized of him, he gives this reason for it, that it was needful that he should do it, that he might fulfil all righteousness. See Matt. iii. 13, 14, 15.

3. Another law that Christ was subject to was *the mediatorial law*, which contained those commands of God to which he was subject not merely as man, nor yet as a Jew, but which related purely to his mediatorial office. Such were the commands which the Father gave him, to teach such doctrines, to preach the gospel, to work such miracles, to call such disciples, to appoint such ordinances, and finally to lay down his life: for he did all these things in obedience to commands he had received of the Father, as he often tells us. And these commands he was not subject to merely as man; for they did not belong to other men; nor yet was he subject to them as a Jew; for they were no part of the Mosaic law; but they were commands that he had received of the Father, that purely respected the work he was to do in the world in his mediatorial office.

And it is to be observed, that Christ's righteousness, by which he merited heaven for himself and all who believe in him, consists principally in his obedience to this mediatorial law; for in fulfilling this law consisted his chief work and business in the world. The history of the evangelists is chiefly taken up in giving an account of his obedience to this law, and this part of his obedience was that which was attended with the greatest difficulty of all; and therefore his obedience in it was most meritorious. What Christ had to do in the world, by virtue of his being mediator, was infinitely more difficult than what he had to do merely as a man, or as a Jew. To his obedience to this mediatorial law belongs his going through his last sufferings, beginning with his agony in the garden, and ending with his resurrection.

As the obedience of the first Adam, wherein his righteousness would have consisted, if he had stood, would have mainly consisted, not in his obedience to the moral law, to which he was subject merely as man, but in his obedience to that special law that he was subject to as moral head and surety of mankind, even the command of abstaining from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; so the obedience of the second Adam, wherein his righteousness consists, lies mainly, not in his obedience to the law that he was subject to merely as man, but to that special law which he was subject to in his office as mediator and surety for man.

Before I proceed to the next distribution of Christ's righteousness, I would observe three things concerning Christ's obedience to these laws.

.. He performed that obedience to them which was in every respect *perfect* It was universal as to the kinds of laws that he was subject to; he obeyed each of these three laws; and it was universal with respect to every individual precept contained in these laws, and it was perfect as to each command. It was perfect as to positive transgressions avoided, for he never transgressed in one instance; he was guilty of no sin of commission. And it was perfect with respect to the work commanded; he perfected the whole work that each command required, and never was guilty of any sin of omission. And it was perfect with respect to the principle from which he obeyed. His heart was perfect, his principles were wholly right, there was no corruption in his heart. And it was perfect with respect to the ends he acted for, for he never had any by-ends, but aimed perfectly at such ends as the law of God required And it was perfect with respect to the manner of performance; every circumstance of each act was perfectly conformed to the command. And it was perfect with respect to the degree of the performance; he acted wholly up to the rule. And it was perfect with respect to the constancy of obedience; he did not only perfectly obey sometimes, but constantly, without any interruption. And it was perfect with respect to perseverance; he held out in perfect obedience to the very end, through all the changes he passed, and all the trials that were before him.

The meritoriousness of Christ's obedience depends on the perfection of it. If it had failed in any instance of perfection, it could not have been meritorious: for imperfect obedience is not accepted as any obedience at all in the sight of the law of works, which was that law that Christ was subject to; for that is not accepted as an obedience to a law that does not answer that law.

2. The next thing I would observe of Christ's obedience is, that it was performed through the greatest trials and temptations that ever any obedience was. His obedience was attended with the greatest difficulties, and most extreme abasement and sufferings that ever any obedience was, which was another thing that rendered it more meritorious and thankworthy. To obey another when his commands are easy, is not so worthy, as it is to obey when it cannot be done without great difficulty.

3. He performed this obedience with infinite respect to God, and the honor of his law. The obedience he performed was with infinitely greater love to God, and regard to his authority, than the angels perform their obedience with. The angels perform their obedience with that love which is perfect, with sinless perfection; but Christ did not do so, but he performed his obedience with much greater love than the angels do theirs, even infinite love; for though the human nature of Christ was not capable of love absolutely infinite, yet Christ's obedience that was performed in that human nature, is not to be looked upon as merely the obedience of the human nature, but the obedience of his person as God-man; and there was infinite love of the person of Christ manifest in that obedience. And this, together with the infinite dignity of the person that obeyed, rendered his obedience infinitely meritorious.

II. The second distribution of the acts of Christ's obedience, is with respect to *the different parts of his life*, wherein they were performed. And in this respect they may be divided into those which were performed in private life and those which were performed in his public ministry.

1*st*. Those acts he performed during his *private life*. He was perfectly obedient in his childhood. He infinitely differed from other children, who, as soon as they begin to act, begin to sin and rebel. He was subject to his earthly parents, though he was Lord of all, Luke ii. 51. He was found about his

Father's business at twelve years of age in the temple, Luke ii. 42. He then began that work that he had to do in fulfilment of the mediatorial law, which the Father had given him. He continued his private life for about thirty years, dwelling at Nazareth, in the house of his reputed father Joseph, where he served God in a private capacity, and in following a mechanical trade, the business of a carpenter.

2dly. Those acts which he performed during his *public ministry*, which began when he was about thirty years of age, and continued for the three last years and a half of his life. Most of the history of the evangelists is taken up in giving an account of what passed during these three years and a half; so is all the history of the evangelist Matthew, excepting the two first chapters. So is the whole of the history of the evangelist Mark; it begins and ends with it. And so also is all the gospel of John, and all the gospel of Luke, excepting the two first chapters; excepting also what we find in the evangelists concerning the ministry of John the Baptist. Christ's first appearing in his public ministry, is what is often called his *coming* in Scripture. Thus John speaks of Christ's coming as what is yet to be, though he had been born long before.

Concerning the public ministry of Christ, I would observe the following things: 1. The forerunner of it. 2. The manner of his first entering upon it. 3. The works in which he was employed during the course of it;—and 4. The manner of his finishing it.

1. The forerunner of Christ's coming in his public ministry was John the Baptist. He came preaching repentance for the remission of sins, to make way for Christ's coming, agreeably to the prophecies of him, Isa. xl. 3, 4, 5, and Matt. iv. 5, 6. It is supposed that John the Baptist began his ministry about three years and a half before Christ; so that John's ministry and Christ's put together, made seven years, which was the last of Daniel's weeks; and this time is intended in Dan. ix. 27, "He will confirm the covenant with many for one week." Christ came in the midst of this week, viz., in the beginning of the last half of it, or the last three years and a half, as Daniel foretold, as in the verse just now quoted: "And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

John the Baptist's ministry consisted principally in preaching the law, to awaken men and convince them of sin, to prepare men for the coming of Christ, to comfort them, as the law is to prepare the heart for the entertainment of the gospel.

A very remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God attended John's ministry, and the effect of it was that Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were awakened, convinced, went out to him, and submitted to his baptism, confessing their sins. John is spoken of as the greatest of all the prophets who came before Christ: Matt. xi. 11, "Among those that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; i. e., he had the most honorable office. He was as the morning star, which is the harbinger of the approaching day, and forerunner of the rising sun. The other prophets were stars that were to give light in the night; but we have heard how those stars went out on the approach of the gospel day. But now the coming of Christ being very nigh, the morning star comes before him, the brightest of all the stars, as John the Baptist was the greatest of all the prophets.

And when Christ came in his public ministry, the light of that morning star decreased too, as we see when the sun rises, it diminishes the light of the morn.

ing star. So John the Baptist says of himself, John iii. 30, "He must increase but I must decrease." And soon after Christ began his public ministry, John the Baptist was put to death; as the morning star is visible a little while after the sun is risen, yet soon goes out.

2. The next thing to be taken notice of is Christ's entrance on his public ministry, which was by baptism, followed with the temptation in the wilderness. His baptism was as it were his solemn inauguration, by which he entered on his ministry; and was attended with his being anointed with the Holy Ghost, in a solemn and visible manner, the Holy Ghost descending upon him in a visible shape like a dove, attended with a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 16, 17.

After this he was led by the devil into the wilderness. Satan made a violent onset upon him at his first entrance on his work; and now he had a remarkable trial of his obedience; but he got the victory. He who had such success with the first Adam, had none with the second.

3. I would take notice of the work in which Christ was employed during his ministry. And here are *three* things chiefly to be taken notice of, viz., his preaching, his working miracles, and his calling and appointing disciples and ministers of his kingdom.

(1.) His preaching the gospel. Great part of the work of his public ministry consisted in this; and much of that obedience by which he purchased salvation for us, was in his speaking those things which the Father commanded him.—He more clearly and abundantly revealed the mind and will of God, than ever it had been revealed before. He came from the bosom of the Father, and perfectly knew his mind, and was in the best capacity to reveal it. As the sun, as soon as it is risen, begins to shine; so Christ, as soon as he came into his public ministry, began to enlighten the world with his doctrine. As the law was given at Mount Sinai, so Christ delivered his evangelical doctrine, full of blessings and not curses, to a multitude on a mountain, as we have an account in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew.

When he preached he did not teach as the scribes, but he taught as one having authority; so that his hearers were astonished at his doctrine. He did not reveal the mind and will of God in the style which the prophets used to preach, as not speaking their own words but the words of another; and used to speak in such a style as this, "Thus saith the Lord;" but Christ, in such a style as this, "I say unto you," thus or thus; "Verily, verily, I say unto you." He delivered his doctrines, not only as the doctrines of God the Father, but as his own doctrines. He gave forth his commands, not as the prophets were wont to do, as God's commands, but as his own commands. He spake in such a style as this, "This is *my commandment*," John xv. 12; "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever *I command* you," verse 14.

(2.) Another thing that Christ was employed in during the course of his ministry, was working miracles. Concerning which we may observe several things.

Their *multitude*. Besides particular instances, we often have an account of multitudes coming at once with diseases, and his healing them.

They were *works of mercy*. In them was displayed not only his infinite power and greatness, but his infinite mercy and goodness. He went about doing good, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and the proper use of their limbs to the lame and halt; feeding the hungry, cleansing the leprous, and raising the dead.

They were almost all of them *such as had been spoken of as the peculiar works of God*, in the Old Testament. So with respect to stilling the sea, Psal. cvii.

29, " He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." So as to walking on the sea in a storm: Job ix. 8, " Which alone—treadeth upon the waves of the sea." So as to casting out devils: Psal. lxxiv. 14, " Thou breakest the heads of leviathan in pieces." So as to feeding a multitude in a wilderness: Deut. viii. 16, " Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna." So as to telling man's thoughts: Amos iv. 13; " Lo, he that—declareth unto man what is his thought—the Lord, the God of hosts is his name." So as to raising the dead: Psal. lxviii. 20, " Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." So as to opening the eyes of the blind: Psal. cxlvi. 8, " The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." So as to healing the sick: Psal. ciii. 3, " Who healeth all thy diseases." So as to lifting up those who are bowed together: Psal. cxlvi. 8, " The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down."

They were in general such works as were *images of the great work which he came to work on man's heart:* representing that inward, spiritual cleansing, healing, renovation, and resurrection, which all his redeemed are the subjects of.

He wrought them in such a manner as to show, that he did them by his own power, and not by the power of another, as the other prophets did. They were wont to work all their miracles in the name of the Lord; but Christ wrought in his own name. Moses was forbidden to enter into Canaan, because he seemed by his speech to assume the honor of working only one miracle to himself. Nor did Christ work miracles as the apostles did, who wrought them all in the name of Christ; but he wrought them in his own name, and by his own authority and will: thus saith he, " I will, be thou clean," Matt. viii. 3. And in the same strain he puts the question, " Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Matt. ix. 28.

(3.) Another thing that Christ did in the course of his ministry, was to call his disciples. He called many disciples. There were many that he employed as ministers: he sent seventy disciples at one time in this work: but there were twelve that he set apart as apostles, who were the grand ministers of his kingdom, and as it were the twelve foundations of his church. See Rev. xxi. 14. These were the main instruments of setting up his kingdom in the world, and therefore shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

4. I would observe how he finished his ministry. And this was,

(1.) In giving his dying counsels to his disciples, and all that should be his disciples, which we have recorded particularly in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John's gospel.

(2.) In instituting a solemn memorial of his death. This he did in instituting the sacrament of the Lord's supper, wherein we have a representation of his body broken, and of his blood shed.

(3.) In offering up himself, as God's high priest, a sacrifice to God, which he did in his last sufferings. This act he did as God's minister, as God's anointed priest; and it was the greatest act of his public ministry, the greatest act of his obedience by which he purchased heaven for believers. The priests of old used to do many other things as God's ministers; but then were they in the highest execution of their office when they were actually offering sacrifice on the altar. So the greatest thing that Christ did in the execution of his priestly office, and the greatest thing that he ever did, and the greatest thing that ever was done, was the offering up himself a sacrifice to God. Herein he was the antitype of all that had been done by all the priests, and in all their sacrifices and offerings, from the beginning of the world.

III. The third distribution of the acts by which Christ purchased redemp-

tion, regards *the virtues that Christ exercised and manifested* in them. And here I would observe, that Christ in doing the work that he had to do here in the world for our redemption, exercised every possible virtue and grace. Indeed there are some particular virtues that sinful man may have that were not in Christ; not from any want or defect of virtue, but because his virtue was perfect and without defect. Such is the virtue of repentance, and brokenness of heart for sin, and mortification, and denying of lust. Those virtues were not in Christ, because he had no sin of his own to repent of, nor any lust to deny. But all virtues which do not presuppose sin, were in him, and that in a higher degree than ever they were in any other man, or any mere creature. Every virtue in him was perfect. Virtue itself was greater in him than in any other; and it was under greater advantages to shine in him than in any other. Strict virtue shines most when most tried: but never any virtue had such trials as Christ's had.

The virtue that Christ exercised in the work he did, may be divided into three sorts, viz., the virtues which more immediately respect God, those which immediately respect himself, and those which immediately respect men.

1. Those *virtues which more immediately respect God*, appeared in Christ in the work that he did for our redemption. There appeared in him a holy fear and reverence towards God the Father. Christ had a greater trial of his virtue in this respect than any other had, from the honorableness of his person.

This was the temptation of the angels that fell, to cast off their worship of God, and reverence of his majesty, that they were beings of such exalted dignity and worthiness themselves. But Christ was infinitely more worthy and honorable than they; for he was the eternal Son of God, and his person was equal to the person of God the Father: and yet, as he had taken on him the office of mediator, and the nature of man, he was full of reverence towards God. He adored him in the most reverential manner, time after time. So he manifested a wonderful love towards God. The angels give great testimonies of their love towards God, in their constancy and agility in doing the will of God; and many saints have given great testimonies of their love, who, from love to God, have endured great labors and sufferings: but none ever gave such testimonies of love to God as Christ has given; none ever performed such a labor of love as he, and suffered so much from love to God. So he manifested the most wonderful submission to the will of God. Never was any one's submission so tried as his was. So he manifested the most wonderful spirit of obedience that ever was manifested.

2. In this work he most wonderfully manifested those *virtues which more immediately respected himself*; as particularly humility, patience, and contempt of the world. Christ, though he was the most excellent and honorable of all men, yet was the most humble; yea, he was the most humble of all creatures. No angel or man ever equalled him in humility, though he was the highest of all creatures in dignity and honorableness. Christ would have been under the greatest temptations to pride, if it had been possible for any thing to be a temptation to him. The temptation of the angels that fell was the dignity of their nature, and the honorableness of their circumstances; but Christ was infinitely more honorable than they. The human nature of Christ was so honored as to be in the same person with the eternal Son of God, who was equal with God; and yet that human nature was not at all lifted up with pride. Nor was the man Christ Jesus at all lifted up with pride with all those wonderful works which he wrought, of healing the sick, curing the blind, lame, and maimed, and raising the dead. And though he knew that God had appointed him to be the

ing over heaven and earth, angels and men, as he says, Matt. xi. 27, "*All* things are delivered unto me of my Father;" though he knew he was such an infinitely honorable person, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God; and though he knew he was the heir of God the Father's kingdom; yet such was his humility, that he did not disdain to be abased and depressed down into lower and viler circumstances and sufferings than ever any other elect creature was; so that he became least of all, and lowest of all. The proper trial and evidence of humility, is stooping or complying with those acts or circumstances, when called to it, which are very low, and contain great abasement. But none ever stooped so low as Christ, if we consider either the infinite height that he stooped from, or the great depth to which he stooped. Such was his humility, that though he knew his infinite worthiness of honor, and of being honored ten thousand times as much as the highest prince on earth, or angel in heaven; yet he did not think it too much when called to it, to be bound as a cursed malefactor, and to become the laughing-stock and spitting-stock of the vilest of men, and to be crowned with thorns, and to have a mock robe put upon him, and to be crucified like a slave and malefactor, and as one of the meanest and worst of vagabonds and miscreants, and an accursed enemy of God and men, who was not fit to live on the earth: and this not for himself, but for some of the meanest and vilest of creatures, some of those accursed wretches that crucified him. Was not this a wonderful manifestation of humility, when he cheerfully and most freely submitted to this abasement?

And how did his patience shine forth under all the terrible sufferings which he endured, when he was dumb, and opened not his mouth, but went as a lamb to the slaughter, and was like a patient lamb under all the sufferings he endured from first to last?

And what contempt of the glory of this world was there, when he rather chose this contempt, and meanness, and suffering, than to wear a temporal crown, and be invested with the external glories of an earthly prince, as the multitude often solicited him!

3. Christ, in the work which he wrought out, in a wonderful manner exercised those *virtues which more immediately respect other men.* And these may be summed up under two heads, viz., meekness and love.

Christ's meekness was his humble calmness of spirit under the provocations that he met with. None ever met with so great provocations as he did. The greatness of provocation lies in two things, viz., in the degree of opposition by which the provocation is given; and, secondly, in the degree of the unreasonableness of that opposition, or in its being very causeless, and without reason, and the great degree of obligation to the contrary. Now, if we consider both these things, no man ever met with such provocations as Christ did, when he was upon earth. If we consider how much he was hated, what abuses he suffered from the vilest of men, how great his sufferings from men were, and how spiteful and how contemptuous they were, in offering him these abuses; and also consider how causeless and unreasonable these abuses were, how undeserving he was of them, and how much deserving of the contrary, viz., of love, and honor, and good treatment at their hands: I say, if we consider these things, no man ever met with a thousandth part of the provocation that Christ met with from men: and yet how meek was he under all! How composed and quiet his spirit! How far from being in a ruffle and tumult! When he was reviled, he reviled not again; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. No appearance was there of a revengeful spirit; on the contrary, what a spirit of forgiveness did he exhibit! So that he fervently

and effectually prayed for their forgiveness, when they were in the highest act of provocation that ever they perpetrated, viz., nailing him to the cross: Luke xxiii. 34, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And never did there appear such an instance of love to men. Christ's love to men that he showed when on earth, and especially in going through his last sufferings, and offering up his life and soul under those sufferings, which was his greatest act of love, was far beyond all parallel. There have been very remarkable manifestations of love in some of the saints, as in the Apostle Paul, the Apostle John, and others: but the love to men that Christ showed when on earth, as much exceeded the love of all other men, as the ocean exceeds a small stream.

And it is to be observed, that all the virtues which appeared in Christ shone brightest in the close of his life, under the trials he met with then Eminent virtue always shows brightest in the fire. Pure gold shows its purity chiefly in the furnace. It was chiefly under those trials which Christ underwent in the close of his life, that his love to God, his honor of God's majesty, and his regard to the honor of his law, and his spirit of obedience, and his humility, and contempt of the world, and his patience and his meekness, and his spirit of forgiveness towards men, appeared. Indeed every thing that Christ did to work out redemption for us appears mainly in the close of his life. Here mainly is his satisfaction for sin, and here chiefly is his merit of eternal life for sinners, and here chiefly appears the brightness of his example, which he hath set us to follow.

Thus we have taken a brief view of the things whereby the purchase of redemption was made with respect to his *righteousness* that appeared in them —I proceed now,

II. To take a view of them with respect to the *satisfaction* that he there by made for sin, or the *sufferings and humiliation* that he was the subject of in them on our account. And here,

I. He was subject to uncommon humiliation and sufferings in his infancy. He was born to that end that he might die; and therefore he did as it were begin to die as soon as he was born. His mother suffered in an uncommon manner in bearing him. When her travail came upon her, it is said, "there was no room in the inn," Luke ii. 7. She was forced to betake herself to a stable; and therefore Christ was born in the place of the bringing forth of beasts. Thus he suffered in his birth, as though he had been meaner and viler than a man, and not possessed of the dignity of the human nature, but had been of the rank of the brute creatures. And we may conclude, that his mother's circumstances in other respects were proportionably strait and difficult, and that she was destitute of the conveniences necessary for so young an infant which others were wont to have; for want of which the new-born babe without doubt suffered much.

And besides, he was persecuted in his infancy. They began to seek his life as soon as he was born. Herod, the chief man of the land, was so engaged to kill him, that, in order to it, he killed all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. And Christ suffered banishment in his infancy, was driven out of his native country into Egypt, and without doubt suffered much by being carried so long a journey, when he was so young, into a strange country.

II. Christ was subject to great humiliation in his private life at Nazareth. He there led a servile obscure life, in a mean laborious occupation: for he is called not only the *carpenter's son*, but the *carpenter:* Mark vi. 3, "Is not

this the carpenter, the brother of James and Joses, and Juda, and Simon?" He, by hard labor, earned his bread before he ate it, and so suffered that curse which God pronounced on Adam, Gen. iii. 13, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Let us consider how great a degree of humiliation the glorious Son of God, the Creator of heaven and earth, was subject to in this, that for about thirty years he should live a private obscure life among laboring men, and all this while be overlooked, and not taken notice of in the world, as more than other common laborers. Christ's humiliation in some respects was greater in private life than in the time of his public ministry. There were many manifestations of his glory in the word he preached, and the great miracles he wrought: but the first thirty years of his life he spent among mean ordinary men, as it were in silence, without those manifestations of his glory, or any thing to make him to be taken notice of more than any ordinary mechanic, but only the spotless purity and eminent holiness of his life; and that was in a great measure hid in obscurity; so that he was little taken notice of till after his baptism.

III. Christ was the subject of great humiliation and suffering during his public life, from his baptism till the night wherein he was betrayed. As particularly,

1. He suffered great poverty, so that he had not "where to lay his head," Matt. viii. 20; and commonly used to lodge abroad in the open air, for want of a shelter to betake himself to; as you will see is manifest, if you compare the following places together, which I shall but name to you, even Matt. viii. 20, and John xviii. 1, 2, and Luke xxi. 37, and chap. xxii. 39. So that what was spoken of Christ in Cant. v. 2, "My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night," was literally fulfilled. And through his poverty he doubtless was often pinched with hunger, and thirst, and cold. We read Matt. iv. 2, that he was an hungered: and so again in Matt. xxi. 18. His mother and natural relations were poor, and not able to help him; and he was maintained by the charity of some of his disciples while he lived. So we read in Luke viii. at the beginning, of certain women that followed him, and ministered to him of their substance. He was so poor, that he was not able to pay the tribute that was demanded of him, without the miraculous coming of a fish to bring him the money out of the sea in his mouth. See Matt. xvii 27 And when he ate his last passover, it was not at his own charge, but at the charge of another, as appears by Luke xxii. 7, &c. And from his poverty he had no grave of his own to be buried in. It was the manner of the Jews, unless they were very poor, and were not able, to prepare themselves a sepulchre while they lived. But Christ had no land of his own, though he was possessor of heaven and earth; and therefore was buried by Joseph of Arimathea's charity, and in his tomb, which he had prepared for himself.

2. He suffered great hatred and reproach. He was despised and rejected of men. He was by most esteemed a poor, insignificant person; one of little account, slighted for his low parentage, and his mean city Nazareth. He was reproached as a glutton and drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners; was called a deceiver of the people; sometimes a madman, and a Samaritan, and one possessed with a devil, John vii. 20, and viii. 48, and x. 20. He was called a blasphemer, and was accounted by many a wizard, or one that wrought miracles by the black art, and by communication with Beelzebub. They excommunicated him, and agreed to excommunicate any man that should own him, as John ix. 22. They wished him dead, and were continually seeking to murder him; sometimes by force, and sometimes by craft. They often took up

stones to stone him, and once led him to the brow of a hill, intending to throw him down the precipice, to dash him in pieces against the rocks.

He was thus hated and reproached by his own visible people: John i. 11. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." And he was principally despised and hated by those who were in chief repute, and were their greatest men. And the hatred wherewith he was hated was general. Into whatever part of the land he went, he met with hatred and contempt. He met with these in Capernaum, and when he went to Jericho, when he went to Jerusalem, which was the holy city, when he went to the temple to worship, and also in Nazareth, his own city, and among his own relations, and his old neighbors.

3. He suffered the buffetings of Satan in an uncommon manner. We read of one time in particular, when he had a long conflict with the devil, when he was in the wilderness forty days, with nothing but wild beasts and devils; and was so exposed to the devil's power, that he was bodily carried about by him from place to place, while he was otherwise in a very suffering state.

And so much for the humiliation and suffering of Christ's public life, from his baptism to the night wherein he was betrayed.

IV. I come now to his last humiliation and sufferings, from the evening of the night wherein he was betrayed to his resurrection. And here was his greatest humiliation and suffering, by which principally he made satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of men. First, his life was sold by one of his own disciples for thirty pieces of silver, which was the price of the life of a servant, as you may see in Exod. xxi. 32. Then he was in that dreadful agony in the garden. There came such a dismal gloom upon his soul, that he began to be sorrowful and very heavy, and said, his "soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and was sore amazed." So violent was the agony of his soul, as to force the blood through the pores of his skin; so that while his soul was overwhelmed with amazing sorrow, his body was all clotted with blood. The disciples, who used to be as his friends and family, at this time, above all, appeared cold towards him, and unconcerned for him, at the same time that his Father's face was hid from him. Judas, to whom Christ had been so very merciful, and treated as one of his family, or familiar friends, comes and betrays him in the most deceitful, treacherous manner. The officers and soldiers apprehend and bind him; his disciples forsake him and flee; his own best friends do not stand by him to comfort him, in this time of his distress. He is led away as a malefactor to appear before the priests and scribes, his venomous, mortal enemies, that they might sit as his judges, who sat up all night, to have the pleasure of insulting him, now they had got him into their hands. But because they aimed at nothing short of his life, they set themselves to find some color to put him to death, and seek for witnesses against him. When none appeared, they set some to bear false witness; and when their witness did not agree together, then they go to examining him to catch something out of his own mouth. They hoped he would say, that he was the Son of God, and then they thought they should have enough. But because they see they are not like to obtain it without it, they then go to force him to say it, by adjuring him in the name of God, to say whether he was or not: and when he confessed that he was, then they supposed they had enough; and then it was a time of rejoicing with them, which they show, by falling upon Christ and spitting in his face, and blindfolding him, and striking him in the face with the palms of their hands, and then bidding him prophesy who it was that struck him: thus ridiculing him for pretending to be a prophet. And the very servants have a hand in the sport: Mark xiv. 65, "And the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands."

During the sufferings of that night, Peter, one of the chief of his own disciples, instead of standing by him to comfort him, appears ashamed to own him, and denies and renounces him with oaths and curses And after the chief priests and elders had finished the night in so shamefully abusing him, when the morning was come, which was the morning of the most wonderful day that ever was, they led him away to Pilate, to be condemned to death by him, because they had not the power of life and death in their own hands. He is brought before Pilate's judgment seat, and there the priests and elders accuse him as a traitor. And when Pilate, upon examining into the matter, declared he found no fault in him, the Jews were but the more fierce and violent to have him condemned. Upon which Pilate, after clearing him, very unjustly brings him upon a second trial; and then, not finding any thing against him, acquits him again. Pilate treats him as a poor worthless fellow; but is ashamed on so little pretence to condemn him as a traitor.

And then he was sent to Herod to be tried by him, and was brought before Herod's judgment seat; and his enemies followed, and virulently accused him before Herod. Herod does not condemn him as a traitor, or one that would set up for a king, but looks upon him as Pilate did, as a poor worthless creature, not worthy to be taken notice of, and does but make a mere laugh of the Jews accusing him as a dangerous person to Cæsar, as one that was in danger of setting up to be a king against him; and therefore, in derision, dresses him up in a mock robe, and makes sport of him, and sends him back through the streets of Jerusalem to Pilate, with the mock robe on.

The Jews prefer Barabbas before him, and are instant and violent with loud voices to Pilate, to crucify him. So Pilate, after he had cleared him twice, and Herod once, very unrighteously brings him on trial the third time, to try if he could not find something against him sufficient to crucify him. Christ was stripped and scourged: thus he gave his back to the smiter. After that, though Pilate still declared that he found no fault in him; yet so unjust was he, that for fear of the Jews he delivered Christ to be crucified. But before they executed the sentence, his spiteful and cruel enemies take the pleasure of another spell of mocking him; they get round him, and make a set business of it. They stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe, and a reed in his hand, and a crown of thorns on his head. Both Jews and Roman soldiers were united in the transaction; they bow the knee before him, and in derision cry, "Hail, king of the Jews." They spit upon him also, and take the reed out of his hand and smite him on the head. After this they led him away to crucify him, and made him carry his own cross, till he sunk under it, his strength being spent; and then they laid it on one Simon a Cyrenian.

At length, being come to Mount Calvary, they execute the sentence which Pilate had so unrighteously pronounced. They nail him to his cross, by his hands and feet, then raise it erect, and fix one end in the ground, he being still suspended on it by the nails which pierced his hands and feet. And now Christ's sufferings are come to the extremity: now the cup which he so earnestly prayed that it might pass from him, is come, and he must, he does drink it.

In those days crucifixion was the most tormenting kind of death by which any were wont to be executed. There was no death wherein the person expired so much of mere torment: and hence the Roman word which signifies *torment*, is taken from this kind of death. And besides what our Lord endured in this excruciating death in his body, he endured vastly more in his soul. Now was that travail of his soul, of which we read in the prophet; now it pleased God to bruise him, and to put him to grief; now he poured out his soul unto

death, as in Isa. liii. And if the mere forethought of this cup made him sweat blood, how much more dreadful and excruciating must the drinking of it have been! Many martyrs have endured much in their bodies, while their souls have been joyful, and have sung for joy, whereby they have been supported under the sufferings of their outward man, and have triumphed over them. But this was not the case with Christ; he had no such support; but his sufferings were chiefly those of the mind, though the other were extremely great. In his crucifixion Christ did not sweat blood, as he had before, because his blood had vent otherwise, and not because his agony was now not so great. But though he did not sweat blood, yet such was the suffering of his soul, that probably it rent his vitals; as seems probable by this, that when his side was pierced, there came forth blood and water. And so here was a kind of literal fulfilment of that in Psalm xxii. 14, "I am poured out like water: my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

Now, under all these sufferings, the Jews still mock him: and wagging their heads say, "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." And even the chief priests, scribes, and elders, joined in the cry, saying, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." And probably the devil at the same time tormented him to the utmost of his power; and hence it is said, Luke xxii. 53, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Under these sufferings, Christ having cried out once and again with a loud voice, at last he said, "It is finished," (John xix. 30,) "and bowed the head, and gave up the ghost." And thus was finished the greatest and most wonderful thing that ever was done. Now the angels beheld the most wonderful sight that ever they saw. Now was accomplished the main thing that had been pointed at by the various institutions of the ceremonial law, and by all the typical dispensations, and by all the sacrifices from the beginning of the world.

Christ being thus brought under the power of death, continued under it till the morning of the next day but one; and then was finished that great work, the purchase of our redemption, for which such great preparation had been made from the beginning of the world Then was finished all that was required in order to satisfy the threatenings of the law, and all that was necessary in order to satisfy divine justice; then the utmost that vindictive justice demanded, even the whole debt was paid. Then was finished the whole of the purchase of eternal life. And now there is no need of any thing more to be done towards a purchase of salvation for sinners; nor has ever any thing been done since, nor will any thing more be done forever and ever.

IMPROVEMENT.

In surveying the history of redemption, from the fall of man to the end of the world, we have now shown how this work was carried on through the two former of the three main periods, into which this whole space of time was divided, viz., from the fall to the incarnation of Christ, and from thence to the end of the time of Christ's humiliation; and have particularly explained how in the first of these periods God prepared the way for Christ's appearing and purchasing redemption; and how in the second period, that purchase was made and finished. I would now make some improvement of what has been said on both these subjects, considered conjunctly. And this I would do,

1. In a use of reproof.
2. In a use of encouragement.

SECTION I.

I begin with a use of reproof; a reproof of three things:

1 Of unbelief.

2 Of self-righteousness.

3. Of a careless neglect of the salvation of Christ.

I. If it be as we have heard, how greatly do these things reprove those who do not believe in, but reject the Lord Jesus Christ! i. e., all those who do not heartily receive him. Persons may receive him in profession, and carry well outwardly towards him, and may wish that they had some of those benefits that Christ has purchased, and yet their hearts not receive Christ: they may be hearty in nothing that they do towards Christ; they may have no high esteem of Christ, nor any sincere honor or respect to Christ; they may never have opened the door of their heart to Christ, but have kept him shut out all their days, ever since they first heard of him, and his salvation has been offered to them. Though their hearts have been opened to others, their doors have been flung wide open to them, and they have had free admittance at all times, and have been embraced and made much of, and the best room in their hearts has been given them, and the throne of their hearts has been allowed them; yet Christ has always been shut out, and they have been deaf to all his knocks and calls. They never could find an inclination of heart to receive him, nor would they ever trust in him.

Let me now call upon you with whom it is thus, to consider how great your sin, in thus rejecting Jesus Christ, appears to be from those things that have been said. You slight the glorious person, for whose coming God made such great preparation in such a series of wonderful providences from the beginning of the world, and whom, after all things were made ready, God sent into the world, bringing to pass a thing before unknown, viz., the union of the divine nature with the human, in one person. You have been guilty of slighting that great Saviour, who after such preparation, actually accomplished the purchase of redemption; and who, after he had spent three or four and thirty years in poverty, labor, and contempt, in purchasing redemption, at last finished the purchase by closing his life under such extreme sufferings as you have heard; and so by his death, and continuing for a time under the power of death, completed the whole. This is the person you reject and despise. You make light of all the glory of his person, and of all the glorious love of God the Father, in sending him into the world, and all his wonderful love appearing in the whole of this affair. That precious stone that God hath laid in Zion for a foundation in such a manner, and by such wonderful works as you have heard, is a stone set at nought by you.

Sinners sometimes are ready to wonder why the sin of unbelief should be looked upon as such a great sin: but if you consider what you have heard, how can you wonder? If it be so, that this Saviour is so great a Saviour, and this work so great a work, and such great things have been done in order to it, truly there is no cause of wonder that the sin of unbelief, or the rejection of this Saviour, is spoken of in Scripture as such a dreadful sin, so provoking to God, and what brings greater guilt than the sins of the worst of the Heathen, who never heard of those things, nor have had this Saviour offered to them.

II. What has been said, affords matter of reproof to those, who, instead of believing in Christ, trust in themselves for salvation. It is a common thing

with men to take it upon themselves to purchase salvation for themselves, and so to do that great work which Christ came into the world to do. Are there none such here who trust in their prayers, and their good conversations, and the pains they take in religion, and the reformation of their lives, and in their self-denial, to recommend them to God, to make some atonement for their past sins, and to draw the heart of God to them?

Consider three things:

1. How great a thing that is which you take upon you.—You take upon you to do the work of the great Saviour of the world. You trust in your own doings to appease God for your sins, and to incline the heart of God to you. Though you are poor, worthless, vile, polluted worms of the dust; yet so arrogant are you, that you take upon you that very work that the only begotten Son of God did when upon earth, and that he became man to capacitate himself for, and in order to which God spent four thousand years in all the great dispensations of his providence in the government of the world, aiming chiefly at this, to make way for Christ's coming to do this work. This is the work that you take upon yourself, and foolishly think yourself sufficient for it; as though your prayers, and other performances, were excellent enough for this purpose. Consider how vain is the thought which you entertain of yourself. How must such arrogance appear in the sight of Christ, whom it cost so much to make a purchase of salvation, when it was not to be obtained even by him, so great and glorious a person, at a cheaper rate than his wading through a sea of blood, and passing through the midst of the furnace of God's wrath. And how vain must your arrogance appear in the sight of God, when he sees you imagining yourself sufficient, and your worthless, polluted performances excellent enough for the accomplishing of that work of his own Son, to prepare the way for which he was employed in ordering all the great affairs of the world for so many ages!

2. If there be ground for you to trust, as you do, in your own righteousness, then all that Christ did to purchase salvation when on earth, and all that God did from the first fall of man to that time to prepare the way for it, is in vain. Your self-righteousness charges God with the greatest folly, as though he has done all things in vain, even so much in vain, that he has done all this to bring about an accomplishment of that which you alone, a little worm, with your poor polluted prayers, and the little pains you take in religion, mingled with all that hypocrisy and filthiness, are sufficient to accomplish for yourself without Christ's help. For if you can appease God's anger, and can commend yourself to God by these means, then you have no need of Christ; but he is dead in vain: Gal. ii. 21, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

If you can do this by your prayers and good works, Christ might have spared his pains, he might have spared his blood: he might have kept within the bosom of his Father, without coming down into this evil world to be despised, reproached, and persecuted to death; and God needed not to have busied himself, as he did for four thousand years together, causing so many changes in the state of the world all that while, in order to the bringing about that which you, as little as you are, can accomplish in a few days, only with the trouble of a few sighs, and groans, and prayers, and some other religious performances Consider with yourself what greater folly could you have devised to charge upon God than this, to do all those things before and after Christ came into the world so needlessly; when, instead of all this he might only have called you forth, and committed the business to you, which you think you can do so easily

Alas! How blind are natural men! How sottish are the thoughts they have of things! And especially how vain are the thoughts which they have of themselves! How ignorant of their own littleness and pollution! How do they exalt themselves, up to heaven! What great things do they assume to themselves!

3. You that trust to your own righteousness, arrogate to yourselves the honor of the greatest thing that ever God himself did; not only as if you were sufficient to perform divine works, and to accomplish some of the great works of God; but such is your pride and vanity, that you are not content without taking upon you to do the very greatest work that ever God himself wrought, even the work of redemption.—You see by what has been said, how God has subordinated all his other works to this work of redemption. You see how God's works of providence are greater than his works of creation, and that all God's works of providence, from the beginning of the generations of men, were in order to this, to make way for the purchasing of redemption. But this is what you take upon yourself. To take on yourself to work out redemption, is a greater thing than if you had taken it upon you to create a world. Consider with yourself what a figure you, a poor worm, would make, if you should seriously go about to create such a world as God did, should swell in your own conceit of yourself, should deck yourself with majesty, pretend to speak the word of power, and call a universe out of nothing, intending to go on in order, and say, "Let there be light: Let there be a firmament," &c. But then consider, that in attempting to work out redemption yourself, you attempt a greater thing than this, and are serious in it, and will not be beat off from it; but strive in it, and are full of the thought of yourself that you are sufficient for it, and always big with hopes of accomplishing it.

You take upon you to do the very greatest and most difficult part of this work, viz., to purchase redemption. Christ can accomplish other parts of this work without cost, without any trouble and difficulty: but this part cost him his life, as well as innumerable pains and labors, with very great ignominy and contempt besides. Yet this is that part which self-righteous persons go about to accomplish for themselves. If all the angels in heaven had been sufficient for this work, would God have set himself to effect such things as he did in order to it, before he sent his Son into the world? And would he ever have sent his own Son, the great Creator and God of the angels, into the world, to have done and suffered such things?

What self-righteous persons takes to themselves, is the same work that Christ was engaged in when he was in his agony and bloody sweat, and when he died on the cross, which was the greatest thing that ever the eyes of angels beheld. This, as great as it is, they imagine they can do the same that Christ accomplished by it. Their self-righteousness does in effect charge Christ's offering up himself in these sufferings, as the greatest instance of folly that ever men or angels saw, instead of being the most glorious display of the divine wisdom and grace that ever was seen. Yea, self-righteousness makes all that Christ did through the whole course of his life, and all that he said and suffered through that whole time, and his incarnation itself, and not only so, but all that God had been doing in the great dispensations of his providence from the beginning of the world to that time, as all nothing, but a scene of the most wild, and extreme, and transcendent folly.

Is it any wonder then that a self-righteous spirit is so represented in Scripture, and spoken of, as that which is most fatal to the souls of men? And is it any wonder, that Christ is represented in Scripture as being so provoked with

the Pharisees and others, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and were proud of their goodness, and thought that their own performances were a valuable price of God's favor and love?

Let persons hence be warned against a self-righteous spirit. You that are seeking your salvation, and taking pains in religion, take heed to yourselves that you do not trust in what you do; that you do not harbor any such thoughts that God now, seeing how much you are reformed, how you take pains in religion, and how you are sometimes affected, will be pacified towards you with respect to your sins, and on account of it will not be so angry for your former sins; and that you shall gain on him by such things, and draw his heart to show you mercy; or at least that God ought to accept of what you do, so as to be inclined by it in some measure to forgive you, and have mercy on you. If you entertain this thought, that God is obliged to do it, and does not act justly if he refuse to regard your prayers and pains, and so quarrel with God, and complain of him for not doing, this shows what your opinion is of your own righteousness, viz., that it is a valuable price of salvation, and ought to be accepted of God as such. Such complaining of God and quarrelling with him, for not taking more notice of your righteousness, plainly shows that you are guilty of all that arrogance that has been spoken of, thinking yourself sufficient to offer the price of your own salvation

III. What has been said on this subject, affords matter of reproof to those who carelessly neglect the salvation of Christ; such as live a senseless kind of life, neglecting the business of religion and their own souls for the present, not taking any course to get an interest in Christ, or what he has done and suffered, or any part in that glorious salvation he has purchased by that price, but rather have their minds taken up about the gains of the world, or about the vanities and pleasures of youth, and so make light of what they hear from time to time of Christ's salvation, that they do not at present so much as seek after it. Let me here apply myself to you in some expostulatory interrogations.

1. Shall so many prophets, and kings, and righteous men, have their minds so much taken up with the prospect, that the purchase of salvation was to be wrought out in ages long after their death; and will you neglect it when actually accomplished? You have heard what great account the church in all ages made of the future redemption of Christ; how joyfully they expected it, how they spoke of it, how they studied and searched into these things, how they sung joyful songs, and had their hearts greatly engaged about it, and yet never expected to see it done, and did not expect that it would be accomplished till many ages after their death, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12. How much did Isaiah and Daniel, and other prophets speak concerning this redemption! And how much were their hearts engaged, and their attention and study fixed upon it! How was David's mind taken up in this subject! He declared that it was all his salvation, and all his desire, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. How did he employ his voice and harp in celebrating it, and the glorious display of divine grace therein exhibited! And all this although they beheld it not as yet accomplished, but saw that it was to be brought to pass so long a time after their day. And before this, how did Abraham and the other patriarchs rejoice in the prospect of Christ's day, and the redemption which he was to purchase! And even the saints before the flood were affected and elated in the expectation of this glorious event, though it was then so long future, and it was so very faintly and obscurely revealed to them.

Now these things are declared to you as actually fulfilled. The church now has seen accomplished al those great things which they so joyfully pro-

phesied of; and you are abundantly shown how those things were accomplished: Matt. xiii. 17, "Verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." And yet when these things are thus abundantly set before you as already accomplished, how do you slight them! How light do you make of them! How little are they taken notice of by you! How unconcerned are you about them, following other things, and not so much as feeling any interest in them! Indeed your sin is extremely aggravated in the sight of God. God has put you under great advantages for your eternal salvation, far greater than those saints of old enjoyed. He has put you under a more glorious dispensation; has given you a more clear revelation of Christ and his salvation; and yet you neglect all these advantages, and go on in a careless course of life, as though nothing had been done, no such proposals and offers had been made you.

2. Have the angels been so engaged about this salvation which is by Christ ever since the fall of man, though they are not immediately concerned in it, and will you, who need it, and have it offered to you, be so careless about it? You have heard how the angels at first were subjected to Christ as mediator, and how they have all along been ministering spirits to him in this affair. In all the great dispensations which you have heard of from the beginning of the world, they have been active, and as a flame of fire in this affair, being most diligently employed as ministering spirits to minister to Christ in this great affair of man's redemption. And when Christ came, how engaged were their minds! They came to Zacharias, to inform him of the coming of Christ's forerunner. They came to the Virgin Mary, to inform her of the approaching birth of Christ: they came to Joseph, to warn him of the danger which threatened the new-born Saviour, and to point out to him the means of safety. And how were their minds engaged at the time of the birth of Christ! The whole multitude of the heavenly host sang praises upon the occasion, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will towards men." And afterwards, from time to time, they ministered to Christ when on earth; they did so at the time of his temptation, at the time of his agony in the garden, at his resurrection, and at his ascension. All these things show, that they were greatly engaged in this affair; and the Scripture informs us, that they pry into these things: 1 Pet. i. 12, "Which things the angels desire to look into." And how are they represented in the Revelation as being employed in heaven in singing praises to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb! Now shall these take so much notice of this redemption, and of the purchaser, who need it not for themselves, and have no immediate concern or interest in it, or offer of it; and will you, to whom it is offered, and who are in such extreme necessity of it, neglect and take no notice of it?

3. Was it worth the while for Christ to labor so hard, and do and suffer so much to procure this salvation, and is it not worth the while for you to be at some labor in seeking it? Was it a thing of so great importance, that salvation should be procured for sinners, as that it was worthy to lie with such weight on the mind of Christ, as to induce him to become man, and to suffer such contempt, and labor, and even death itself, in order to procure it, though he stood in need of nothing, though he was like to gain no addition to his eternal happiness, though he could get nothing by those that he saved; though he did not need them; was it of such importance that sinners should be saved, that he might properly be induced to submit to such humiliation and suffering; and yet is it not worth the while for you, who are one of those mis-

erable sinners that need this salvation, and must perish eternally without it, to take earnest pains to obtain an interest in it after it is procured, and all things are ready?

4. Shall the great God be so concerned about this salvation, as so often to overturn the world to make way for it; and when all is done, is it not worth your seeking after? How has the Lord of heaven and earth been as it were engaged about this affair! What great, what wonderful things has he done from one age to another, removing kings and setting up kings, raising up a great number of prophets, separating a distinct nation from the rest of the world, overturning one nation and kingdom, and another, and often overturning the state of the world; and so has continued bringing about one change and revolution after another for forty centuries in succession, to make way for the procuring of this salvation! And when he has done all; and when, at the close of these ages, the great Saviour comes, and becoming incarnate, and passing through a long series of reproach and suffering, and then suffering all the waves and billows of God's wrath for men's sins, insomuch that they overwhelmed his soul: after all these things done to procure salvation for sinners, is it not worthy of your taking so much notice of, or being so much concerned about, though you are those persons who need this salvation, but that it should be thrown by, and made nothing of in comparison of worldly gain, or gay clothing, or youthful diversions, and other such trifling things?

O! that you who live negligent of this salvation, would consider what you do! What you have heard from this subject, may show you what reason there is in that exclamation of the Apostle, Heb. ii. 3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" And in that, Acts xiii. 41, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." God looks on such as you as great enemies of the cross of Christ, and adversaries and despisers of all the glory of this great work. And if God has made such account of the glory of salvation as to destroy many nations, and so often overturn all nations, to prepare the way for the glory of his Son in this affair; how little account will he make of the lives and souls of ten thousand such opposers and despisers as you that continue impenitent, in comparison of that glory, when he shall hereafter come and find that your welfare stands in the way of that glory? Why surely you shall be dashed to pieces as a potter's vessel, and trodden down as the mire of the streets. God may, through wonderful patience, bear with hardened, careless sinners for a while; but he will not long bear with such despisers of his dear Son, and his great salvation, the glory of which he has had so much at heart, before he will utterly consume without remedy of mercy.

SECTION II.

I will conclude with a second use, of encouragement to burdened souls to put their trust in Christ for salvation. To all such as are not careless and negligent, but do make seeking an interest in Christ their main business, being sensible in some measure of their necessity of an interest in Christ; being afraid of the wrath to come; to such, what has been said on this subject holds forth great matter of encouragement, to come and venture their souls on the Lord Jesus Christ: and as motives proper to excite you so to do, let me lead you to consider two things in particular.

1. The completeness of the purchase which has been made. As you have heard, this work of purchasing salvation was wholly finished during the time of Christ's humiliation. When Christ rose from the dead, and was exalted from that abasement to which he submitted for our salvation, the purchase of eternal life was completely made, so that there was no need of any thing more to be done in order to it. But now the servants were sent forth with the message which we have account of in Matt. xxii. 4: "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." Therefore all things being ready, are your sins many and great? Here is enough done by Christ to procure their pardon. There is no need of any righteousness of yours to obtain your pardon and justification: no, you may come freely, without money and without price. Since therefore there is such a free and gracious invitation given you, come; come naked as you are; come as a poor condemned criminal; come and cast yourself down at Christ's feet, as one justly condemned, and utterly helpless in yourself. Here is a complete salvation wrought out by Christ, and through him offered to you. Come, therefore, accept of it and be saved.

2. For Christ to reject one that thus comes to him, would be to frustrate all those great things which you have heard that God brought to pass from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ. It would also frustrate all that Christ did and suffered while on earth; yea, it would frustrate the incarnation of Christ itself, and all the great things done in preparation for his incarnation; for all these things were for that end, that those might be saved who should come to Christ. Therefore, you may be sure Christ will not be backward in saving those who come to him, and trust in him; for he has no desire to frustrate himself in his own work; it cost him too dear for that. Neither will God the Father refuse you; for he has no desire to frustrate himself in all that he did for so many hundreds and thousands of years, to prepare the way for the salvation of sinners by Christ. Come, therefore, hearken to the sweet and earnest calls of Christ to your soul. Do as he invites, and as he commands you, Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

PERIOD III.

In discoursing on this subject, we have already shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the two first of the three periods into which we divided the whole space of time from the fall to the end of the world; and we are now come to

The third and last period, beginning with Christ's resurrection, and reaching to the end of the world; and would now show how this work was also carried on through this period from this

Proposition, That the space of time from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world, is all taken up in bringing about the great effect or success of Christ's purchase.

Not but that there were great effects and glorious success of Christ's purchase of redemption before, even from the beginning of the generations of

men. But all that success of Christ's redemption which was before, was only preparatory, and was by way of anticipation, as some few fruits are gathered before the harvest. There was no more success before Christ came than God saw needful to prepare the way for his coming. The proper time of the success or effect of Christ's purchase of redemption is after the purchase has been made, as the proper time for the world to enjoy the light of the sun is the daytime, after the sun is risen, though we may have some small matter of it reflected from the moon and planets before. And even the success of Christ's redemption while he himself was on earth, was very small in comparison of what it was after the conclusion of his humiliation.

But Christ, having finished that greatest and most difficult of all works, the work of the purchase of redemption, now is come the time for obtaining the end of it, the glorious effect of it. This is the next work he goes about. Having gone through the whole course of his sufferings and humiliation, there is an end to all things of that nature: he is never to suffer any more. But now is the time for him to obtain the joy that was set before him. Having made his soul an offering for sin, now is the time for him to see his seed, and to have a portion divided to him with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong.

One design of Christ in what he did in his humiliation, was to lay a foundation for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom; and now is come the time to effect it, as Christ, a little before his crucifixion, said, John xii. 31: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Another design was, to gather together in one all things in Christ. Now is come the time for this also: John xii. 32, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me;" which is agreeable to Jacob's prophecy of Christ, that when "*Shiloh* should come, to him should the gathering of the people be," Gen. xlix. 10. Another design is the salvation of the elect. Now when his sufferings are finished, and his humiliation is perfected, the time is come for that also: Heb. v. 8, 9, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Another design was, to accomplish by these things great glory to the persons of the Trinity. Now also is come the time for that: John xvii. 1, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." Another design was the glory of the saints. Now is the time also for this: John xvii. 2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." And all the dispensations of God's providence henceforward, even to the final consummation of all things, are to give Christ his reward, and fulfil his end in what he did and suffered upon earth, and to fulfil the joy that was set before him.

INTRODUCTION.

Before I enter on the consideration of any particular things accomplished in this period, I would briefly observe some things in general concerning it; and particularly how the times of this period are represented in Scripture.

I. The times of this period, for the most part, are those which in the Old Testament are called *the latter days*. We often, in the prophets of the Old Testament, read of such and such things that should come to pass *in the latter days*, and sometimes in the *last days*. Now these expressions of the prophets are most commonly to be understood of the times of the period that we are

now upon. They are called *the latter days*, and *the last days;* because this is the last period of the series of God's providences on earth, the last period of that great work of providence, the work of redemption; which is as it were the sum of God's works of providence, the time wherein the church is under the last dispensation of the covenant of grace that ever it will be under on earth.

II. The whole time of this period is sometimes in Scripture called *the end of the world* as, 1 Cor. x. 11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And the Apostle, Heb. ix. 26, in this expression of *the end of the world*, means the whole of the gospel day, from the birth of Christ to the finishing of the day of judgment: "But now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." This space of time may well be called *the end of the world;* for this whole time is taken up in bringing things to their great end and issue, that great issue that God had been preparing the way for, in all the great dispensations of providence, from the first fall of man to this time. Before, things were in a kind of preparatory state; but now they are in a finishing state. It is the winding up of things which is all this while accomplishing. An end is now brought to the former carnal state of things, which by degrees vanishes, and a spiritual state begins to be established, and to be established more and more. First, an end is brought to the former state of the church, which may be called its worldly state, the state wherein it was subject to carnal ordinances, and the rudiments of the world: and then an end is brought to the Jewish state, in the destruction of their city and country: and then, after that, an end is brought to the old Heathen empire in Constantine's time; which is another and further degree of the winding up and finishing of the world: and the next step is the finishing of Satan's visible kingdom in the world, upon the fall of Antichrist, and the calling of the Jews: and last will come the destruction of the outward frame of the world itself, at the conclusion of the day of judgment. But the world is all this while as it were a finishing, though it comes to an end by several steps and degrees. Heaven and earth began to shake, in order to a dissolution, according to the prophecy of Haggai, before Christ came, that so only those things that cannot be shaken may remain, i. e., that those things that are to come to an end may come to an end, and that only those things may remain which are to remain to all eternity.

So, in the first place, the carnal ordinances of the Jewish worship came to an end, to make way for the establishment of that spiritual worship, the worship of the heart, which is to endure of all eternity: John iv. 21, "Jesus saith unto the woman, Believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." Ver. 23, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." This is one instance of the temporary world's coming to an end, and the eternal world's beginning. And then, after that, the outward temple and the outward city Jerusalem came to an end, to give place to the setting up of the spiritual temple and the spiritual city, which are to last to eternity; which is another instance of removing those things which are ready to vanish away, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. And then, after that, the old Heathen empire comes to an end, to make way for the empire of Christ, which shall last to all eternity; which is another step of bringing the temporal world to an end, and of the beginning of the world to come, which is an eternal

world. And after that, and upon the fall of Antichrist, an end is put to Satan's visible kingdom on earth, to establish Christ's kingdom, which is an eternal kingdom; as the prophet Daniel says, chap. vii. 27: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him;" which is another instance of the ending of the temporary world, and the beginning of the eternal one. And then, lastly, the very frame of this corruptible world shall come to an end, to make way for the church to dwell in another dwelling place, which shall last to eternity; which is the last instance of the same thing.

Because the world is thus coming to an end by various steps and degrees, the Apostle perhaps uses this expression, that the *ends* of the world are come on us; not the *end*, but the *ends*, of the plural number, as though the world has several endings one after another.

The gospel dispensation is the last state of things in the world; and this state is a finishing state: it is all spent in finishing things off which before had been preparing, or abolishing things which before had stood. It is all spent as it were in summing things up, and bringing them to their issues, and their proper fulfilment. Now all the old types are fulfilled, and all the prophecies of all the prophets from the beginning of the world shall be accomplished in this period.

III. That state of things which is attained in the events of this period is called *a new heaven and a new earth:* Isa. lxv. 17, 18, "For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." And ch. lxvi. 22, "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I make, shall remain before me; so shall your seed and your name remain." See also ch. li. 16. As the former state of things, or the old world, by one step after another, is through this period coming to an end; so the new state of things, or the new world, which is a spiritual world, is beginning and setting up.

The heaven and earth which are corruptible, are shaking, that the new heavens and new earth, which cannot be shaken, may be established and remain.

In consequence of each of these finishings of the old state of things, there is a new beginning of a new and eternal state of things. So was that which accompanied the destruction of Jerusalem, which was an establishing of the spiritual Jerusalem, instead of the literal. So with respect to the destruction of the old Heathen empire, and all the other endings of the old state of things, till at length the very outward form of the old world itself shall come to an end; and the church shall dwell in a world new to it, or to a great part of it, even heaven, which will be a new habitation; and then shall the utmost be accomplished that is meant by the new heavens and the new earth. See Rev. xxi. 1.

The end of God's creating the world was to prepare a kingdom for his Son (for he is appointed heir of the world), and that he might have the possession of it, and a kingdom in it, which should remain to all eternity. So that, so far forth as the kingdom of Christ is set up in the world, so far is the world brought to its end, and the eternal state of things set up. So far are all the great changes and revolutions of the ages of the world brought to their everlasting issue, and all things come to their ultimate period. So far

are the waters of the long channel of divine Providence, which has so many branches, and so many windings and turnings, emptied out into their proper ocean, which they have been seeking from the beginning and head of their course, and so are come to their rest. So far as Christ's kingdom is established in the world, so far are things wound up and settled in their everlasting state, and a period put to the course of things in this changeable world; so far are the first heavens and the first earth come to an end, and the new heavens and the new earth, the everlasting heavens and earth, established in their room.

This leads me to observe,

IV. That the state of things which is attained by the events of this period, is what is so often called *the kingdom of heaven*, or *the kingdom of God*. We very often read in the New Testament of the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist preached, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; and so did Christ, and his disciples after him; referring to something that the Jews in those days expected and very much talked of, which they called by that name. They seem to have taken their expectation and the name chiefly from that prophecy of Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. ii. 44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom;" together with that in chap vii. 13, 14.

Now this kingdom of heaven is that evangelical state of things in his church, and in the world, wherein consists the success of Christ's redemption in this period. There had been often great kingdoms set up before, which were earthly kingdoms; as the Babylonish, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman monarchies. But Christ came to set up the last kingdom, which is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly, and so is the kingdom of heaven: John xviii. 36, "My kingdom is not of this world." This is the kingdom of which Christ speaks, Luke xxii. 29, "My Father hath appointed to me a kingdom." This kingdom began soon after Christ's resurrection, and was accomplished in various steps from that time to the end of the world. Sometimes by *the kingdom of heaven*, is meant that spiritual state of the church which began soon after Christ's resurrection; sometimes that more perfect state of the church which shall obtain after the downfall of Antichrist; and sometimes that glorious and blessed state to which the church shall be received at the day of judgment: 1 Cor. xv. 50, the apostle, speaking of the resurrection, says, "This I say, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Under this head I would observe several things particularly, for the clearer understanding of what the Scripture says concerning this period.

1. The setting up of the kingdom of Christ is chiefly accomplished by four successive great events, each of which is in Scripture called *Christ's coming in his kingdom*. The whole success of Christ's redemption is comprehended in one word, viz., his setting up his kingdom. This is chiefly done by four great successive dispensations of Providence; and every one of them is represented in Scripture as Christ's coming in his kingdom. The first is Christ's appearing in those wonderful dispensations of Providence in the apostles' days in setting up his kingdom, and destroying the enemies of his kingdom, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. This is called Christ's coming in his kingdom, Matt. xvi. 28: "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingom." And so it is represented in Matt. xxiv. The second is that which was accomplished in Constantine's time, in the destruction of the Heathen Roman empire.

This is represented as Christ's coming, and is compared to his coming to judgment, in the 6th chapter of Revelation at the latter end. The third is that which is to be accomplished at the destruction of Antichrist. This also is represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom in the 7th chapter of Daniel, and in other places, as I may possibly show hereafter, when I come to speak of it. The fourth and last is his coming to the last judgment, which is the event principally signified, in Scripture by *Christ's coming in his kingdom.*

2. I would observe, that each of the three former of these is a lively image or type of the fourth and last, viz., Christ's coming to the final judgment, as the principal dispensations of Providence before Christ's first coming, were types of that first coming.——As Christ's last coming to judgment is accompanied with a resurrection of the dead, so is each of the three foregoing with a spiritual resurrection. That coming of Christ which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was preceded by a glorious spiritual resurrection of souls in the calling of the Gentiles, and bringing home such multitudes of souls to Christ by the preaching of the gospel. So Christ's coming in Constantine's time, was accompanied with a glorious spiritual resurrection of the greater part of the known world, in a restoration of it to a visible church state, from a state of Heathenism. So Christ's coming at the destruction of Antichrist, will be attended with a spiritual resurrection of the church after it had been long as it were dead in the times of Antichrist. This is called the *first resurrection* in the 20th chapter of Revelation.

Again, as Christ in the last judgment will gloriously manifest himself, coming in the glory of his Father, so in each of the three foregoing events, Christ gloriously manifested himself in sending judgments upon his enemies, and in showing grace and favor to his church; and as the last coming of Christ will be attended with a literal gathering together of the elect from the four winds of heaven, so were each of the preceding attended with a spiritual gathering in of the elect. As this gathering together of the elect will be effected by God's angels, with a great sound of a trumpet, as in Matt. xxiv. 31; so were each of the preceding spiritual ingatherings effected by the trumpet of the gospel, sounded by the ministers of Christ. As there shall precede the last appearance of Christ, a time of great degeneracy and wickedness, so this has been, or will be, the case with each of the other appearances. Before each of them is a time of great opposition to the church.—Before the first, by the Jews, in their persecutions that we read of in the New Testament; before the second, viz., in Constantine's time, by the Heathen, in several successive persecutions raised by the Roman emperors against the Christians; before the third, by Antichrist; and before the last, by Gog and Magog, as described in the Revelation.

By each of these comings of Christ, God works a glorious deliverance for his church. Each of them is accompanied with a glorious advancement of the state of the church. The first, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was attended with bringing the church into the glorious state of the gospel, a glorious state of the church very much prophesied of old, whereby the church was advanced into far more glorious circumstances than it was in before under the Jewish dispensation. The second, which was in Constantine's time, was accompanied with an advancement of the church into a state of liberty from persecution, and the countenance of civil authority, and triumph over their Heathen persecutors. The third, which shall be at the downfall of Antichrist, will be accompanied with an advancement of the church into that state of the glorious prevalence of truth, liberty, peace, and joy, that we so often read of

in the prophetical parts of Scripture. The last will be attended with the advancement of the church to consummate glory in both soul and body in heaven.

Each of these comings of Christ is accompanied with a terrible destruction of the wicked, and the enemies of the church. The first, with the destruction of the persecuting Jews, which was amazingly terrible; the second, with dreadful judgments on the Heathen persecutors of the church, of which more hereafter; the third, with the awful destruction of Antichrist, the most cruel and bitter enemy that ever the church had; the fourth, with divine wrath and vengeance on all the ungodly.

Further, there is in each of these comings of Christ an ending of the old heavens and the old earth, and a beginning of new heavens and a new earth; or an end of a temporal state of things, and a beginning of an eternal state.

3. I would observe, that each of those four great dispensations which are represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom, are but so many steps and degrees of the accomplishment of one event. They are not the setting up of so many distinct kingdoms of Christ; they are all of them only several degrees of the accomplishment of that one event prophesied of, Dan. vii. 13, 14: "And I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This is what the Jews expected, and called "the coming of the kingdom of heaven;" and what John the Baptist and Christ had respect to, when they said, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This great event is gradually accomplished, or is accomplished by several steps. Those four great events which have been mentioned, were several steps towards the accomplishment of this grand event.

When Christ came with the preaching of the apostles, to set up his kingdom in the world, which dispensation ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, then it was accomplished in a glorious degree; when the Heathen empire was destroyed in Constantine's time, it was fulfilled in a further degree; when Antichrist shall be destroyed, it will be accomplished in a yet higher degree: but when the end of the world is come, then will it be accomplished in its most perfect degree of all; then it will be finally and completely accomplished. And because these four great events are but images one of another, and the three former but types of the last, and since they are all only several steps of the accomplishment of the same thing; hence we find them all from time to time prophesied of under one, as they are in the prophecies of Daniel, and as they are in the 24th chapter of Matthew, where some things seem more applicable to one of them, and others to another.

4. I would observe, that, as there are several steps of the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, so in each one of them the event is accomplished in a further degree than in the foregoing. That in the time of Constantine was a greater and further accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, than that which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem; that which shall be at the fall of Antichrist, will be a further accomplishment of the same thing, than that which took place in the time of Constantine; and so on with regard to each: so that the kingdom of Christ is gradually prevailing and growing by these several great steps of its fulfilment, from the time of Christ's resurrection, to the end of the world.

5. And lastly, it may be observed, that the great providences of God between these four great events, are to make way for the kingdom and glory of Christ in the great event following. Those dispensations of Providence which were towards the church of God and the world, before the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine, seem all to have been to make way for the glory of Christ, and the happiness of the church in that event. And so the great providences of God which are after that, till the destruction of Antichrist, and the beginning of the glorious times of the church which follow, seem all to be to prepare the way for the greater glory of Christ and his church in that event; and the providences of God which shall be after that to the end of the world, seem to be for the greater manifestation of Christ's glory at the end of the world, and in the consummation of all things.

Thus I thought it needful to observe those things in general concerning this last period of the series of God's providence, before I take notice of the particular providences by which the work of redemption is carried on through this period, in their order: and before I do that, I will also briefly answer to an INQUIRY, viz., Why the setting up of Christ's kingdom after his humiliation should be so gradual, by so many steps that are so long in accomplishing, since God could easily have finished it at once?

Though it would be presumption in us to pretend to declare all the ends of God in this, yet doubtless much of the wisdom of God may be seen in it by us; and particularly in these two things.

1. In this way the glory of God's wisdom, in the manner of doing this, is more visible to the observation of creatures. If it had been done at once, in an instant, or in a very short time, there would not have been such opportunities for creatures to perceive and observe the particular steps of divine wisdom, as when the work is gradually accomplished, and one effect of his wisdom is held forth to observation after another. It is wisely determined of God, to accomplish his great design by a wonderful and long series of events, that the glory of his wisdom may be displayed in the whole series, and that the glory of his perfections may be seen, appearing, as it were, by parts, and in particular successive manifestations: for if all that glory which appears in all these events had been manifested at once, it would have been too much for us, and more than we at once could take notice of; it would have dazzled our eyes, and overpowered our sight.

2. Satan is more gloriously triumphed over. God could easily, by an act of almighty power, at once have crushed Satan. But by giving him time to use his utmost subtlety to hinder the success of what Christ had done and suffered, he is not defeated merely by surprise, but has large opportunity to ply his utmost power and subtlety again and again, to strengthen his own interest all that he can by the work of many ages. Thus God destroys and confounds him, and sets up Christ's kingdom time after time, in spite of all his subtle machinations and great works, and by every step advances it still higher and higher, till at length it is fully set up, and Satan perfectly and eternally vanquished in the end of all things.

I now proceed to take notice of the particular events, whereby, from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world, the success of Christ's purchase has been or shall be accomplished.

1. I would take notice of those things whereby Christ was put into an immediate capacity for accomplishing the end of his purchase.

2 I would show how he obtained or accomplished that success

PART I.

I would take notice, first, of those things by which Christ was put into a capacity for accomplishing the end of his purchase. And they are two things, viz., his resurrection, and his ascension. As we observed before, the incarnation of Christ was necessary in order to Christ's being in a near capacity for the purchase of redemption; so the resurrection and ascension of Christ were requisite, in order to his accomplishing the success of his purchase.

I. His resurrection. It was necessary, in order to Christ's obtaining the end and effect of his purchase of redemption, that he should rise from the dead. For God the Father had committed the whole affair of redemption, not only the purchasing of it but the bestowing of the blessing purchased, to his Son, that he should not only purchase it as a priest, but actually bring it about as king; and that he should do this as God-man. For God the Father would have nothing to do with fallen man in a way of mercy, but by a mediator. But in order that Christ might carry on the work of redemption, and accomplish the success of his own purchase as God-man, it was necessary that he should be alive, and so that he should rise from the dead. Therefore Christ, after he had finished this purchase by death, and by continuing for a time under the power of death, rises from the dead, to fulfil the end of his purchase, and himself to bring about that for which he died: for this matter God the Father had committed unto him, that he might, as Lord of all, manage all to his own purpose: Rom. xiv. 9, "For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living."

Indeed Christ's resurrection, and so his ascension, was part of the success of what Christ did and suffered in his humiliation. For though Christ did not properly purchase redemption for himself, yet he purchased eternal life and glory for himself, by what he did and suffered; and this eternal life and glory was given him as a reward of what he did and suffered: Phil. ii..8, 9, "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." And it may be looked upon as part of the success of Christ's purchase, if it be considered, that Christ did not rise as a private person, but as the head of the elect church; so that they did, as it were, all rise with him. Christ was justified in his resurrection, i. e., God acquitted and discharged him hereby, as having done and suffered enough for the sins of all the elect: Rom. iv. 25, "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." And God put him in possession of eternal life, as the head of the church, as a sure earnest that they should follow. For when Christ rose from the dead, that was the beginning of eternal life in him. His life before his death was a mortal life, a temporal life; but his life after his resurrection was an eternal life: Rom. vi. 9, "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him." Rev. i. 18, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen."—But he was put in possession of this eternal life, as the head of the body; and took possession of it, not only to enjoy himself, but to bestow on all who believe in him: so that the whole church, as it were, rises in him. And now he who lately suffered so much, after this is to suffer no more forever, but to enter into eternal glory. God the Father neither expects nor desires any more suffering.

This resurrection of Christ is the most joyful event that ever came to pass

because hereby Christ rested from the great and difficult work of purchasing redemption, and received God's testimony, that it was finished. The death of Christ was the greatest and most wonderful event that ever came to pass; but that has a great deal in it that is sorrowful. But by the resurrection of Christ, that sorrow is turned into joy. The head of the whole church, in that great event enters on the possession of eternal life; and the whole church is, as it were, "begotten again to a lively hope," 1 Pet. i. 3. Weeping had continued for a night, but now joy cometh in the morning, the most joyful morning that ever was. This is the day of the reigning of the head of the church, and all the church reigns with him. This is spoken of as a day which was worthy to be commemorated with the greatest joy of all days: Psal. cxviii. 24. "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." And therefore this, above all other days, is appointed for the day of the church's spiritual rejoicing to the end of the world, to be weekly sanctified, as their day of holy rest and joy, that the church therein may rest and rejoice with her head. And as the third chapter of Genesis is the most sorrowful chapter in the Bible; so those chapters in the evangelists, that give an account of the resurrection of Christ, may be looked upon as the most joyful chapters in all the Bible: for those chapters give an account of the finishing of the purchase of redemption, and the beginning of the glory of the head of the church, as the greatest seal and earnest of the eternal glory of all the rest.

It is further to be observed, that the day of the gospel most properly begins with the resurrection of Christ. Till Christ rose from the dead, the Old Testament dispensation remained: but now it ceases, all being fulfilled that was shadowed forth in the typical ordinances of that dispensation: so that here most properly is the end of the Old Testament night, and Christ rising from the grave with joy and glory, was as the joyful bridegroom of the church, as a glorious conqueror, to subdue their enemies under their feet; or was like the sun, rising, as it were from under the earth, after a long night of darkness, and coming forth as a bridegroom, prepared as a strong man to run his race, appearing in joyful light to enlighten the world. Now that joyful and excellent dispensation begins, that glorious dispensation, of which the prophets prophesied so much; now the gospel sun is risen in glory, "and with healing in his wings," that those who fear God's name, may "go forth and grow up as calves of the stall."

II. Christ's ascension into heaven. In this I would include his sitting at the right hand of God. For Christ's ascension and sitting at the right hand of God, can scarcely be looked upon as two distinct things: for Christ's ascension was nothing else, but ascending to God's right hand; it was coming to sit down at his Father's right hand in glory. This was another thing whereby Christ was put into a capacity for the accomplishing the effect of his purchase; as one that comes to be a deliverer of a people as their king, in order to it, and that he may be under the best capacity for it, is first installed in his throne. We are told that Christ was exalted for this end, that he might accomplish the success of his redemption: Acts. v. 31, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, for to give repentance unto Israel, and the remission of sins."

Christ's ascension into heaven was, as it were, his solemn enthronization, whereby the Father did set him upon the throne, and invest him with the glory of his kingdom which he had purchased for himself, that he might thereby obtain the success of his redemption in conquering all his enemies: Psal. cx. 1, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Christ entered into heaven, in order to obtain the success of his pur-

chase, as the high priest of old, after he had offered sacrifice, entered into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice, in order to obtain the success of the sacrifice which he had offered. See Heb. ix. 12. He entered into heaven, there to make intercession for his people, to plead the sacrifice which he had made in order to the success of it, Heb. vii. 25.

And as he ascended into heaven, God the Father did in a visible manner set him on the throne as king of the universe. He then put the angels all under him, and subjected heaven and earth under him, that he might govern them for the good of the people for whom he had died, Eph. i. 20, 21, 22.

And as Christ rose from the dead, so he ascended into heaven as the head of the body and forerunner of all the church; and so they, as it were, ascend with him, as well as rise with him: so that we are both raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, Eph. ii. 6.

The day of Christ's ascension into heaven was doubtless a joyful, glorious day in heaven. And as heaven received Christ, God-man, as its king, so doubtless it received a great accession of glory and happiness, far beyond what it had before. So that the times in both parts of the church, both that part which is in heaven, and also that which is on earth, are become more glorious since Christ's humiliation than before.

So much for those things whereby Christ was put into the best capacity for obtaining the success of redemption.

PART II.

I NOW proceed to show how he accomplished this success. And here I would observe, that this success consists in two things, viz., either in Grace, or in Glory. That success which consists in the former, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages of the church wherein the church is continued under the outward means of Grace. That success which consists in the latter of these, viz., Glory, has its chief accomplishment at the day of judgment.

SECTION I.

I would first consider the former kind of success, consisting in God's grace here; which mainly appears in the works of God during the time that the Christian church continues under the means of grace; which is from Christ's resurrection to his appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment; which includes the three former of those great events of providence before mentioned, which are called *Christ's coming in his kingdom.* In speaking of this success, I would,

1. Mention those things by which the means of this success were established after Christ's resurrection; and,

2. Consider the success itself.

§ I. I would consider those dispensations of Providence, by which the means of this success were established after Christ's resurrection.

1. The abolishing of the Jewish dispensation. This indeed was gradually done, but it began from the time of Christ's resurrection, in which the abolition of it was founded. This was the first thing done towards bringing the

former state of the world to an end. This is to be looked upon as the great means of the success of Christ's redemption. For the Jewish dispensation was not fitted for more than one nation: it was not fitted for the practice of the world in general, or for a church of God dwelling in all parts of the world nor would it have been in any wise practicable by them: it would have been impossible for men living in all parts of the world to go to Jerusalem three times a year, as was prescribed in that constitution. When therefore God had a design of enlarging his church, as he did after Christ's resurrection, it was necessary that this dispensation should be abolished. If it had been continued, it would have been a great block and hinderance to the enlargement of the church. And besides, their ceremonial law, by reason of its burdensomeness, and great peculiarity of some of its rites, was, as it were, a wall of partition, and was the ground of enmity between the Jews and Gentiles, and would have kept the Gentiles from complying with the true religion. This wall therefore was broken down, to make way for the more extensive success of the gospel; as Eph. ii. 14, 15.

II. The next thing in order of time seems to be the appointment of the Christian Sabbath. For though this was gradually established in the Christian church, yet those things by which the revelation of God's mind and will was made, began on the day of Christ's resurrection, by his appearing then to his disciples, John xx. 19; and was afterwards confirmed by his appearing from time to time on that day rather than any other, John xx. 26, and by his sending down the Holy Spirit so remarkably on that day, Acts. ii. 1, and afterwards in directing that public assemblies and the public worship of Christians should be on that day, which may be concluded from Acts xx. 7, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, and Rev. i. 10. And so the day of the week on which Christ rose from the dead, that joyful day, is appointed to be the day of the church's holy rejoicing to the end of the world, and the day of their stated public worship. And this is a very great and principal means of the success which the gospel has had in the world.

III. The next thing was Christ's appointment of the gospel ministry, and commissioning and sending forth his apostles to teach and baptize all nations. Of these things we have an account in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—There were three things done by this one instruction and commission of Christ to his apostles, viz.,

1. The appointment of the office of the gospel ministry. For this commission which Christ gives to his apostles, in the most essential parts of it, belongs to all ministers; and the apostles, by virtue of it, were ministers or elders of the church.

2. Here is something peculiar in this commission of the apostles, viz., to go forth from one nation to another, preaching the gospel in all the world. The apostles had something above what belonged to their ordinary character as ministers; they had an extraordinary power of teaching and ruling, which extended to all the churches; and not only all the churches which then were, but all that should be to the end of the world by their ministry. And so the apostles were, as it were in subordination to Christ, made foundations of the Christian church. See Eph. ii. 20, and Rev. xxi. 14.

3. Here is an appointment of Christian baptism. This ordinance indeed had a beginning before; John the Baptist and Christ both baptized But

now especially by this institution is it established as an ordinance to be upheld in the Christian church to the end of the world. The ordinance of the Lord's supper had been established before, just before Christ's crucifixion.

IV. The next thing to be observed, is the enduing the apostles, and others, with extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; such as the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, of prophecy, &c. The Spirit of God was poured out in great abundance in this respect; so that not only ministers, but a very great part of the Christians through the world were endued with them, both old and young; not only officers, and more honorable persons, but the meaner sort of people, servants and handmaids, were commonly endued with them, agreeable to Joel's prophecy, Joel ii. 28, 29, of which prophecy the Apostle Peter takes notice, that it is accomplished in this dispensation, Acts ii. 16.

How wonderful a dispensation was this! Under the Old Testament, but few had such honors put upon them by God. Moses wished that all the Lord's people were prophets, Numb. xi. 29; whereas Joshua thought it much that Eldad and Medad prophesied. But now we find the wish of Moses fulfilled. And this continued in a very considerable degree to the end of the apostolic age, or the first hundred years after the birth of Christ, which is therefore called *the age of miracles.*

This was a great means of the success of the gospel in that age, and of establishing the Christian church in all parts of the world; and not only in that age, but in all ages to the end of the world: for Christianity being by this means established through so great a part of the known world by miracles, it was after that more easily continued by tradition; and then, by means of these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, the apostles, and others, were enabled to write the New Testament, to be an infallible rule of faith and manners to the church, to the end of the world. And furthermore, these miracles stand recorded in those writings as a standing proof and evidence of the truth of the Christian religion to all ages.

V. The next thing I would observe is the revealing those glorious doctrines of the gospel fully and plainly, which had under the Old Testament been obscurely revealed. The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, his ascension and glory, and the way of salvation, under the Old Testament, were in a great measure hid under the vail of types and shadows and more obscure revelations, as Moses put a vail on his face to hide the shining of it; but now the vail of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom; and Christ, the antitype of Moses, shines: the shining of his face is without a vail; 2 Cor. iii. 12, 13, and 18. Now these glorious mysteries are plainly revealed, which were in a great measure kept secret from the foundation of the world, Eph. iii. 3, 4, 5. Rom. xvi. 25, "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest;" and Col. i. 26, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

Thus the Sun of righteousness, after it is risen from under the earth, begins to shine forth clearly, and not only by a dim reflection as it did before. Christ, before his death, revealed many things more clearly than ever they had been revealed in the Old Testament; but the great mysteries of Christ's redemption and reconciliation by his death, and justification by his righteousness, were not so plainly revealed before Christ's resurrection. Christ gave this reason for it, that he would not put new wine into old bottles; and it was gradually done after Christ's resurrection. In all likelihood, Christ much more clearly instructed

them personally after his resurrection, and before his ascension; as we read that he continued with them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom, Acts. i. 3; and that "he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures," Luke. xxiv. 45. But the clear revelation of these things was principally after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, agreeable to Christ's promise, John xvi. 12, 13, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." This clear revelation of the mysteries of the gospel, as they are delivered, we have chiefly through the hands of the Apostle Paul, by whose writings a child may come to know more of the doctrines of the gospel, in many respects, than the greatest prophets knew under the darkness of the Old Testament.

Thus we see how the light of the gospel, which began to dawn immediately after the fall, and gradually grew and increased through all the ages of the Old Testament, as we observed as we went along, is now come to the light of perfect day, and the brightness of the sun shining forth in his unveiled glory.

VI. The next thing that I would observe, is the appointment of the office of deacons in the Christian church, which we have an account of in the 6th chapter of the Acts, to take care for the outward supply of the members of Christ's church and the exercise of that great Christian virtue of charity.

VII. The calling, and qualifying, and sending the Apostle Paul. This was begun in his conversion as he was going to Damascus, and was one of the greatest means of the success of Christ's redemption that followed: for this success was more by the labors, preaching, and writings of this Apostle, than all the other apostles put together. For, as he says, 1 Cor. xv. 10, he "labored more abundantly than they all;" so his success was more abundant than that of them all. As he was the apostle of the Gentiles, so it was mainly by his ministry that the Gentiles were called, and the gospel spread through the world; and our nation, and the other nations of Europe, have the gospel among them chiefly through his means; and he was more employed by the Holy Ghost in revealing the glorious doctrines of the gospel by his writings, for the use of the church in all ages, than all the other apostles taken together.

VIII. The next thing I would observe, is the institution of ecclesiastical councils, for deciding controversies, and ordering the affairs of the church of Christ, of which we have an account in the 15th chapter of Acts.

IX. The last thing I shall mention under this head, is the committing the New Testament to writing. This was all written after the resurrection of Christ; and all written, either by the apostles, or by the evangelists, who were companions of the apostles. All the New Testament was written by the apostles themselves, excepting what was written by Mark and Luke, viz., the gospels of Mark and Luke, and the book of the Acts of the Apostles. He that wrote the gospel of Mark, is supposed to be he whose mother was Mary, in whose house they were praying for Peter, when he, brought out of prison by the angel, came and knocked at the door; of which we read, Acts xii. 12: "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together, praying." He was the companion of the apostles Barnabas and Saul: Acts xv. 37, "And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark." He was Barnabas's sister's son, and seems sometimes to have been a companion of the Apostle Paul: Col. iv. 10, "Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; touching whom ye received commandment if he come unto you receive him." The apostles seem to have

made great account of him, as appears by those places, and also by Acts xii. 25: "And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark;" and Acts xiii. 5, "And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to their minister;" and 2 Tim. iv. 11, "Only Luke is with me: take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

This Luke, who wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, was a great companion of the Apostle Paul. He is spoken of as being with him in the last mentioned place, and speaks of himself as accompanying him in his travels in the history of the Acts; and therefore he speaks in the first person plural, when speaking of Paul's travels, saying, We went to such and such a place: we set sail: we launched from such a place; and landed at such a place. He was greatly beloved by the Apostle Paul: he is that beloved physician spoken of, Col. iv. 14. The apostle ranks Mark and Luke among his fellow laborers; Philemon 24, "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers."

The rest of the books were all written by the apostles themselves. The books of the New Testament are either historical, or doctrinal, or prophetical. The historical books are the writings of the four evangelists, giving us the history of Christ and his purchase of redemption, and his resurrection and ascension; and the Acts of the Apostles, giving an account of the great things by which the Christian church was first established and propagated. The doctrinal books are the epistles. These, most of them, we have from the great Apostle Paul. And we have one prophetical book, which takes place after the end of the history of the whole Bible, and gives an account of the great events which were to come to pass, by which the work of redemption was to be carried on to the end of the world

All these books are supposed to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, excepting those which were written by the Apostle John, who lived the longest of all the apostles, and wrote what he wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, as is supposed. And to this beloved disciple it was that Christ revealed those wonderful things which were to come to pass in his church to the end of time; and he was the person that put the finishing hand to the canon of the Scriptures, and sealed the whole of it. So that now the canon of Scripture, that great and standing written rule, which was begun about Moses's time, is completed and settled, and a curse denounced against him that adds any thing to it, or diminishes any thing from it. And so all things are established and completed which relate to the appointed means of grace. All the stated means of grace were finished in the apostolical age, or before the death of the Apostle John, and are to remain unaltered to the day of judgment.

Thus far we have considered those things by which the means of grace were given and established in the Christian church.

§ II. The other thing proposed, relating to the success of Christ's redemption during the church's continuance under means of grace, was to show how this success was carried on; which is what I would now proceed to do.

And here it is worthy to be remembered that the Christian church, during its continuance under means of grace, is in two very different states.

1. In a suffering, afflicted, persecuted state; as, for the most part it is, from the resurrection of Christ till the fall of Antichrist.

2. In a state of peace and prosperity; which is the state that the church for the most part, is to be in after the fall of Antichrist.

First, I would show how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on during the continuance of the church's suffering state, from the resurrection of Christ to the fall of Antichrist. This space of time, for the most part, is a state of the church's sufferings, and is so represented in Scripture. Indeed God is pleased, out of love and pity to his elect, to grant many intermissions of the church's sufferings during this time, whereby the days of tribulation are as it were shortened. But from Christ's resurrection till the fall of Antichrist, is the appointed day of Zion's troubles During this space of time, for the most part, some part or other of the church is under persecution; and great part of the time, the whole church, or at least the generality of God's people, have been persecuted.

For the first three hundred years after Christ, the church was for the most part in a state of great affliction, the object of reproach and persecution; first by the Jews, and then by the Heathen. After this, from the beginning of Constantine's time, the church had rest and prosperity for a little while; which is represented in Rev. vii. at the beginning, by the angel's holding the four winds for a little while. But presently after, the church again suffered persecution from the Arians; and after that, Antichrist rose, and the church was driven away into the wilderness, and was kept down in obscurity, and contempt, and suffering for a long time, under Antichrist before the reformation by Luther and others. And since the Reformation, the church's persecutions have been beyond all that ever were before. And though some parts of God's church sometimes have had rest, yet to this day, for the most part, the true church is very much kept under by its enemies, and some parts of it under grievous persecution; and so we may expect it will continue till the fall of Antichrist; and then will come the appointed day of the church's prosperity on earth, the set time in which God will favor Zion, the time when the saints shall not be kept under by wicked men, as it has been hitherto; but wherein they shall be uppermost, and shall reign on earth, as it is said, Rev. v. 10, "And the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," Dan. vii. 27.

This suffering state of the church is in Scripture represented as a state of the church's travail, John xvi. 20, 21, and Rev. xii. 1, 2. What the church is in travail striving to bring forth during this time, is that glory and prosperity of the church which shall be after the fall of Antichrist, and then shall she bring forth her child. This is a long time of the church's trouble and affliction, and is so spoken of in Scripture, though it be spoken of as being but for a little season, in comparison of the eternal prosperity of the church. Hence the church, under the long continuance of this affliction, cries out, as in Rev. vi. 10, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And we are told, that "white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." So Dan. xii. 6, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"

It is to be observed, that during the time of these sufferings of the church, the main instrument of their sufferings has been the Roman government: her afflictions have almost all along been from Rome. That is therefore in the New Testament called *Babylon;* because, as of old, the troubles of the city Jerusalem were mainly from that adverse city Babylon, so the troubles of the Christian church, the spiritual Jerusalem, during the long time of its tribulation, is mainly from Rome. Before the time of Constantine, the troubles

of the Christian church were from Heathen Rome: since that time its troubles have been mainly from Antichristian Rome. And, as of old the captivity of the Jews ceased on the destruction of Babylon, so the time of the trouble of the Christian church will cease with the destruction of the church of Rome, that spiritual Babylon.

In showing how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on, during his time of the church's tribulation, I would,

1. Show how it was carried on till the destruction of Jerusalem, with which ended the first great dispensation of Providence which is called *Christ's coming in his kingdom.*

2. How it was carried on from thence to the destruction of the Heathen empire in the time of Constantine, which is the second dispensation called *Christ's coming.*

How it was carried on from thence to the destruction of Antichrist, when will be accomplished the third great event called *Christ's coming*, and with which the days of the church's tribulation and travail end.

I. I would show how the success of Christ's purchase of redemption was carried on from Christ's resurrection to the destruction of Jerusalem. In speaking of this, I would, 1, take notice of the success itself; and, 2, the opposition made against it by the enemies of it: and, 3, the terrible judgments of God on those enemies.

1. I would observe the success itself. Soon after Christ had finished the purchase of redemption, and was gone into heaven, and entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, there began a glorious success of what he had done and suffered. Having undermined the foundation of Satan's kingdom, it began to fall apace. Swiftly did it hasten to ruin in the world, which might well be compared to Satan's falling like lightning from heaven. Satan before had exalted his throne very high in this world, even to the very stars of heaven, reigning with great glory in his Heathen Roman empire: but never before had he such a downfall as he had soon after Christ's ascension. He had, we may suppose, been very lately triumphing in a supposed victory, having brought about the death of Christ, which he doubtless gloried in as the greatest feat that ever he did; and probably imagined he had totally defeated God's design by him. But he was quickly made sensible, that he had only been ruining his own kingdom, when he saw it tumbling so fast so soon after, as a consequence of the death of Christ. For Christ, by his death, having purchased the Holy Spirit, and having ascended, and received the Spirit, he poured it forth abundantly for the conversion of thousands and millions of souls.

Never had Christ's kingdom been so set up in the world. There probably were more souls converted in the age of the apostles than had been before from the beginning of the world till that time. Thus God so soon begins gloriously to accomplish his promise to his Son, wherein he had promised, that he should see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, if he would make his soul an offering for sin. And,

(1.) Here is to be observed the success which the gospel had among the Jews: for God first began with them. He being about to reject the main body of that people, first calls in his elect from among them, before he forsook them, to turn to the Gentiles. It was so in former great and dreadful judgments of God on that nation: the bulk of them were destroyed, and only a remnant saved, or reformed. So it was in the rejection of the ten tribes, long before this rejection: the bulk of the ten tribes were rejected, when they left the true worship of God in Jeroboam's time, and afterwards more fully in Ahab's

time. But yet there was a remnant of them that God reserved. A number left their possessions in these tribes, and went and settled in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. And afterwards there were seven thousand in Ahab's time, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. And so, in the captivity into Babylon, only a remnant of them ever returned to their own land. And so now again, by far the greater part of the people were rejected entirely, but some few were saved. And therefore the Holy Ghost compares this reservation of a number that were converted by the preaching of the apostles, to those former remnants: Rom. ix 27, "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." See Isa. x. 22.

The glorious success of the gospel among the Jews after Christ's ascension, began by the pouring out of the Spirit upon the day of Pentecost, of which we read in Acts ii. So wonderful was this pouring out of the Spirit and so remarkable and swift the effect of it, that we read of three thousand who were converted to the Christian faith in one day, Acts ii. 41. And probably the greater part of these were savingly converted. And after this, we read of God's adding to the church daily such as should be saved, verse 47. And soon after, we read, that the number of them were about five thousand. Thus were not only a multitude converted, but the church was then eminent in piety, as appears by Acts ii. 46, 47, and iv. 32.

Thus the Christian church was first of all of the nation of Israel; and therefore, when the Gentiles were called, they were but as it were added to Israel, to the seed of Abraham. They were added to the Christian church of Israel, as the proselytes of old were to the Mosaic church of Israel; and so were as it were only grafted on the stock of Abraham, and were not a distinct tree; for they are all still the seed of Abraham and Israel; as Ruth the Moabitess, and Uriah the Hittite, and other proselytes of old, were the same people, and ranked as the seed of Israel.

So the Christian church at first began at Jerusalem, and from thence was propagated to all nations: so that this church of Jerusalem was the church that was as it were the mother of all other churches in the world; agreeable to the prophecy, Isaiah ii. 3, 4, "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people." So that the whole church of God is still God's Jerusalem; they are his spiritual Jerusalem, and are as it were only added to the church, which was begun in the literal Jerusalem.

After this, we read of many thousands of Jews that believed in Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 20. And so we read of multitudes of Jews who were converted in other cities of Judea; and not only so, but even in other parts of the world. For wherever the apostles went, if there were any Jews there, their manner was first to go into the synagogues of the Jews, and preach the gospel to them, and many in one place and another believed; as in Damascus and Antioch, and many other places that we read of in the Acts of the Apostles.

In this pouring out of the Spirit, which began at the Pentecost following Christ's ascension, began that first great dispensation which is called *Christ's coming in his kingdom.*—Christ's coming thus in a spiritual manner for the glorious setting up of his kingdom in the world, is represented by Christ himself as his coming down from heaven, whither he had ascended, John xiv. 18. There Christ, having been speaking of his ascension, says, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you," speaking of his coming by the coming of the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. And verse 28, "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you." And thus the apostles

began to see the kingdom of heaven come with power, as he promised they should, Mark ix. 1

(2.) What is next to be observed is the success of the gospel among the Samaritans. After the success of the gospel had been so gloriously begun among the proper Jews, the Spirit of God was next wonderfully poured out on the Samaritans, who were not Jews by nation, but the posterity of those whom the king of Assyria removed from different parts of his dominions, and settled in the land that was inhabited by the ten tribes whom he carried captive. But yet they had received the five books of Moses, and practised most of the rites of the law of Moses, and so were a sort of mongrel Jews. We do not find them reckoned as Gentiles in the New Testament: for the calling of the Gentiles is spoken of as a new thing after this, beginning with the conversion of Cornelius. But yet it was an instance of making that a people that were no people: for they had corrupted the religion which Moses commanded, and did not go up to Jerusalem to worship, but had another temple of their own in mount Gerizim; which is the mountain of which the woman of Samaria speaks, when she says, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain" Christ there does not approve of their separation from the Jews; but tells the woman of Samaria, that they worshipped they knew not what, and that salvation is of the Jews. But now salvation is brought from the Jews to them by the preaching of Philip (excepting that before Christ had some success among them), with whose preaching there was a glorious pouring out of the Spirit of God in the city of Samaria; where we are told that "the people believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of Christ, and were baptized, both men and women; and that there was great joy in that city," Acts viii. 8—12.

Thus Christ had a glorious harvest in Samaria; which is what Christ seems to have had respect to, in what he said to his disciples at Jacob's well, three or four years before, on occasion of the people of Samaria's appearing at a distance in the fields coming to the place where Christ was, at the instigation of the woman of Samaria. On that occasion he bids his disciples lift up their eyes to the fields, for that they were white to the harvest, John iv. 35, 36. The disposition which the people of Samaria showed towards Christ and his gospel, showed that they were ripe for the harvest. But now the harvest is come by Philip's preaching. There used to be a most bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans; but now, by their conversion, the Christian Jews and Samaritans are all happily united; for in Christ Jesus is neither Jew nor Samaritan, but Christ is all in all. This was a glorious instance of the wolf's dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard's lying down with the kid.

(3.) The next thing to be observed is the success there was of the gospel in calling the Gentiles. This was a great and glorious dispensation of divine providence, much spoken of in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and spoken of by the apostles, time after time, as a most glorious event of Christ's redemption. This was begun in the conversion of Cornelius and his family, greatly to the admiration of Peter, who was used as the instrument of it, and of those who were with him, and of those who were informed of it; as you may see, Acts x. and xi. And the next instance of it that we have any account of, was in the conversion of great numbers of Gentiles in Cyprus, and Cyrene, and Antioch, by the disciples that were scattered abroad by the persecution which arose about Stephen, as we have an account in Acts xi. 19, 20, 21. And presently upon this the disciples began to be called Christians first at Antioch, verse 26.

And after this, vast multitudes of Gentiles were converted in many different parts of the world, chiefly by the ministry of the Apostle Paul, a glorious pour-

ing out of the Spirit accompanying his preaching in one place and another. Multitudes flocked into the church of Christ in a great number of cities where the Apostle came. So the number of the members of the Christian church that were Gentiles, soon far exceeded the number of its Jewish members; yea, so that in less than ten years time after Paul was sent forth from Antioch to preach to the Gentiles, it was said of him and his companions, that they had turned the world upside down: Acts xvii. 6, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." But the most remarkable pouring out of the Spirit in a particular city that we have any account of in the New Testament, seems to be that in the city of Ephesus, which was a very great city. Of this we have an account in Acts xix. There was also a very extraordinary ingathering of souls at Corinth, one of the greatest cities in all Greece. And after this many were converted in Rome, the chief city of all the world; and the gospel was propagated into all parts of the Roman empire. Thus the gospel sun, which had lately risen on the Jews, now rose upon, and began to enlighten the Heathen world, after they had continued in gross Heathenish darkness for so many ages.

This was a great thing, and a new thing, such as never had been before. All nations but the Jews, and a few who had at one time and another joined with them, had been rejected from about Moses's time. The Gentile world had been covered over with the thick darkness of idolatry: but now, at the joyful, glorious sound of the gospel, they began in all parts to forsake their old idols, and to abhor them, and to cast them to the moles and to the bats, and to learn to worship the true God, and to trust in his Son Jesus Christ; and God owned them for his people: those who had so long been afar off, were made nigh by the blood of Christ. Men were changed from being Heathenish and brutish, to be the children of God; were called out of Satan's kingdom of darkness, and brought into God's marvellous light; and in almost all countries throughout the known world were assemblies of the people of God; joyful praises were sung to the true God, and Jesus Christ the glorious Redeemer. Now that great building which God began soon after the fall of man rises gloriously, not in the same manner that it had done in former ages, but in quite a new manner; now Daniel's prophecies concerning the last kingdom, which should succeed the four Heathenish monarchies, begins to be fulfilled; now the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, began to smite the image on its feet, and to break it in pieces, and to grow great, and to make great advances towards filling the earth; and now God gathers together the elect from the four winds of heaven, (by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers the angels of the Christian church sent forth with the great sound of the gospel trumpet), before the destruction of Jerusalem, agreeable to what Christ foretold, Matt. xxiv. 31.

This was the success of Christ's purchase during this first period of the Christian church, which terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. I would proceed now, in the second place, to take notice of the opposition which was made to this success of Christ's purchase by the enemies of it.—Satan, who was so ready to triumph and exult, as though he had gained the victory in putting Christ to death, now finding himself fallen into the pit which he had digged, and finding his kingdom falling so fast, and seeing Christ's kingdom make such amazing progress, such as never had been before, we may conclude he was filled with the greatest confusion and astonishment, and hell seemed to be effectually alarmed by it to make the most violent opposition against it. And, first, the devil stirred up the Jews, who had be-

fore crucified Christ, to persecute the church: for it is observable, that the persecution which the church suffered during this period, was mostly from the Jews. Thus we read in the Acts, when, at Jerusalem, the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost, how the Jews mocked, and said, "These men are full of new wine;" and how the scribes and Pharisees, and the captain of the temple, were alarmed, and bestirred themselves to oppose and persecute the apostles, and first apprehended and threatened them, and afterwards imprisoned and beat them; and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, they stoned Stephen in a tumultuous rage; and were not content to persecute those that they could find in Judea, but sent abroad to Damascus and other places, to persecute all that they could find every where. Herod, who was chief among them, stretched forth his hands to vex the church, and killed James with the sword, and proceeded to take Peter also, and cast him into prison.

So in other countries, we find that almost wherever the apostles came, the Jews opposed the gospel in a most malignant manner, contradicting and blaspheming. How many things did the blessed Apostle Paul suffer at their hands in one place and another! How violent and bloodthirsty did they show themselves towards him, when he came to bring alms to his nation! In this persecution and cruelty was fulfilled that saying of Christ, Matt. xxiii. 34, "Behold, I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city."

3. I proceed to take notice of those judgments which were executed on those enemies of Christ, the persecuting Jews.

(1.) The bulk of the people were given up to judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Christ denounced such a wo upon them in the days of his flesh; as Matt. xiii. 14, 15—This curse was also denounced on them by the Apostle Paul, Acts xxviii. 25, 26, 27; and under this curse, under this judicial blindness and hardness, they remain to this very day, having been subject to it for about 1700 years, being the most awful instance of such a judgment, and monuments of God's terrible vengeance, of any people that ever were. That they should continue from generation to generation so obstinately to reject Christ, so that it is a very rare thing that any one of them is converted to the Christian faith, though their own Scriptures of the Old Testament, which they acknowledge, are so full of plain testimonies against them, is a remarkable evidence of their being dreadfully left of God.

(2.) They were rejected and cast off from being any longer God's visible people. They were broken off from the stock of Abraham, and since that have no more been reputed his seed, than the Ishmaelites or Edomites, who are as much his natural seed as they. The greater part of the two tribes were now cast off, as the ten tribes had been before, and another people were taken in their room, agreeable to the predictions of their own prophets; as of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 21, "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation;" and of Isa. lxv. 1, "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not."—They were visibly rejected and cast off, by God's directing his apostles to turn away from them, and let them alone, as Acts xiii. 46, 47: "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves

unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles: for so hath the Lord commanded us." And so Acts xviii. 6, and xxviii. 28.

Thus far we have had the Scripture history to guide us: henceforward we shall have the guidance only of two things, viz., of Scripture prophecy, and God's providence, as related in human histories.——But I proceed.

(3.) The third and last judgment of God on those enemies of the success of the gospel which I shall mention, is the terrible destruction of their city and country by the Romans. They had great warnings and many means used with them before this destruction. First, John the Baptist warned them, and told them, that the axe was laid at the root of the tree; and that every tree which should not bring forth good fruit, should be hewn down, and cast into the fire. Then Christ warned them very particularly, and told them of their approaching destruction, and at the thoughts of it wept over them. And then the apostles after Christ's ascension abundantly warned them. But they proved obstinate, and went on in their opposition to Christ and his church, and in their bitter persecuting practices. Their so malignantly persecuting the Apostle Paul, of which we have an account towards the end of the Acts of the Apostles, is supposed to have been not more than seven or eight years before their destruction.

And after this God was pleased to give them one more very remarkable warning by the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, which is an epistle written to that nation of the Jews, as is supposed, about four years before their destruction; wherein the plainest and clearest arguments are set before them from their own law, and from their prophets, for whom they professed such a regard, to prove that Christ Jesus must be the Son of God, and that all their law pointed to him and typified him, and that their Jewish dispensation must needs have now ceased. For though the epistle was more immediately directed to the Christian Hebrews, yet the matter of the epistle plainly shows that the apostle intended it for the use and conviction of the unbelieving Jews. And in this epistle he mentions particularly the approaching destruction, as chap. x. 25, "So much the more, as ye see the day approaching;" and in verse 27, he speaks of the approaching judgment and fiery indignation which should devour the adversaries.

But the generality of them refusing to receive conviction, God soon destroyed them with such terrible circumstances as the destruction of no country or city since the foundation of the world can parallel; agreeably to what Christ foretold, Matt. xxiv. 21: "For then shall be tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." The first destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was very terrible, as it is in a most affecting manner described by the prophet Jeremiah, in his Lamentations; but this was nothing to the dreadful misery and wrath which they suffered in this destruction: God, according as Christ foretold, bringing on them all the righteous blood that had been shed from the foundation of the world. Thus the enemies of Christ are made his footstool after his ascension, agreeably to God's promise in Psalm cx. at the beginning; and Christ rules them with a rod of iron. They had been kicking against Christ, but they did but kick against the pricks. The briers and thorns set themselves against him in battle: but he went through them; he bound them together.

This destruction of Jerusalem was in all respects agreeable to what Christ had foretold of it, Matt. xxiv. as appears by the account which Josephus gives of it, who was then present, and was one of the Jews, who had a share in the calamity, and wrote the history of their destruction. Many circumstances of

this destruction resembled the destruction of the wicked at the day of judgment, by his account, being accompanied with many fearful sights in the heavens, and with a separation of the righteous from the wicked. Their city and temple were burnt, and razed to the ground, and the ground on which the city stood was ploughed; and so one stone was not left upon another, Matt. xxiv. 2.

The people had ceased for the most part to be an independent government after the Babylonish captivity: but the sceptre entirely departed from Judah on the death of Archelaus; and then Judea was made a Roman province; after this they were cast off from being the people of God; but now their very city and land are utterly destroyed, and they carried away from it; and so have continued in their dispersions through the world for now above 1600 years.

Thus there was a final end to the Old Testament world: all was finished with a kind of day of judgment, in which the people of God were saved, and his enemies terribly destroyed.—Thus does he who was so lately mocked, despised, and spit upon by these Jews, and whose followers they so malignantly persecuted, appear gloriously exalted over his enemies.

Having thus shown how the success of Christ's purchase was carried on till the destruction of Jerusalem, I come now,

II. To show how it was carried on from that time till the destruction of the Heathen empire in the time of Constantine the Great, which is the second great event which is in Scripture compared to Christ's coming to judgment.

Jerusalem was destroyed about the year of our Lord 68, and so before that generation passed away which was contemporary with Christ; and it was about thirty-five years after Christ's death. The destruction of the Heathen empire under Constantine, was about 260 years after this. In showing how the success of the gospel was carried on through this time, I would, 1. Take notice of the opposition made against it by the Roman empire. 2. How the work of the gospel went on notwithstanding all that opposition. 3. The peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress that the church was in, just before their deliverance by Constantine. 4. The great revolution in Constantine's time.

1. I would briefly show what opposition was made against the gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, by the Roman empire. The opposition what was made to the gospel by the Heathen Roman empire, was mainly after the destruction of Jerusalem, though their opposition began before; but the opposition that was before the destruction of Jerusalem, was mainly by the Jews. But when Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews were put out of a capacity of much troubling the church. Now therefore the devil turns his hand elsewhere, and uses other instruments. The opposition which was made in the Roman empire against the kingdom of Christ, was chiefly of two kinds.

(1.) They employed all their learning, and philosophy, and wit, in opposing it. Christ came into the world in an age wherein learning and philosophy were at their height in the Roman empire. This was employed to the utmost against the kingdom of Christ. The gospel, which held forth a crucified Saviour, was not at all agreeable to the notions of the philosophers. The Christian scheme of trusting in such a crucified Redeemer, appeared foolish and ridiculous to them. Greece was a country the most famous for learning of any in the Roman empire; but the apostle observes, that the doctrine of Christ crucified appeared foolishness to the Greeks, 1 Cor. i. 23; and therefore the wise men and philosophers opposed the gospel with all the wit they had. We have a specimen of their manner of opposing, in the story we have

of their treatment of the Apostle Paul at Athens, which was a city that had been for many ages the chief seat of philosophers of any in the whole world. We read in Acts xvii. 18, that the philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics encountered him, saying, "What will this babbler say? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods." So they were wont to deride and ridicule Christianity. And after the destruction of Jerusalem, several of these philosophers published books against it; the chief of whom were Celsus and Porphyry. These wrote books against the Christian religion with a great deal of virulence and contempt, much after the manner that the Deists of the present age oppose and ridicule Christianity. Something of their writings yet remains. As great enemies and despisers as they were of the Christian religion, yet they never denied the facts recorded of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, particularly the miracles which they wrought; but allowed them. They lived too near the times wherein these miracles were wrought to deny them; for they were so publicly done, and so lately, that neither Jews nor Heathens in those days appeared to deny them; but they ascribed them to the power of magic.

(2) The authority of the Roman empire employed all their strength, time after time, to persecute, and if possible to root out Christianity. This they did in ten general successive persecutions. We have heretofore observed, that Christ came into the world when the strength of Heathen dominion and authority was the greatest that ever it was under the Roman monarchy, the greatest and strongest human monarchy that ever was on earth. All the strength of this monarchy was employed for a long time to oppose and persecute the Christian church, if possible to destroy it, in ten successive attempts, which are called *the ten Heathen persecutions*, which were before Constantine.

The first of these, which was the persecution under Nero, was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, in which the Apostle Peter was crucified, and the Apostle Paul beheaded, soon after he wrote his second epistle to Timothy. When he wrote that epistle, he was a prisoner at Rome under Nero, and was soon after he wrote it beheaded, agreeably to what he says, chap. iv. 6, 7, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."—And there were many thousands of other Christians slain in that persecution. The other nine persecutions were all after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some of these were very terrible indeed, and far exceeded the first persecution under Nero. One emperor after another set himself with the utmost rage to root out the Christian church from the earth, that there should not be so much as the name of Christian left in the world. And thousands and millions were put to cruel deaths in these persecutions; for they spared neither sex nor age, but killed them as fast as they could.

Under the second general persecution, that which was next after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostle John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, where he had those visions of which he has given an account in the Revelation. Under that persecution it was reckoned, that about 40,000 suffered martyrdom; which yet was nothing to what were put to death under some succeeding persecutions. Ten thousand suffered that one kind of cruel death, crucifixion, in the third persecution under the Emperor Adrian. Under the fourth persecution, which began about the year of Christ 162, many suffered martyrdom in England, the land of our forefathers, where Christianity had been planted very early, and, as is supposed, in the days of the apostles. And in the later persecutions, the Roman emperors being vexed at the frustration of their pre-

decessors, who were not able to extirpate Christianity, or hinder its progress, were enraged to be the more violent in their attempts.

Thus a great part of the first three hundred years after Christ was spent in violent and cruel persecutions of the church by the Roman powers. Satan was very unwilling to let go his hold of so great a part of the world, and every way the chief part of it, as the countries contained in the Roman empire were, of which he had had the quiet possession for so many ages; and therefore, when he saw it going so fast out of his hands, he bestirred himself to his utmost; all hell was, as it were, raised against it to oppose it with its utmost power.

Satan thus exerting himself by the power of the Heathen Roman empire, is called *the great red dragon* in Scripture, having seven heads and ten horns, fighting against the woman clothed with the sun, as in the 12th of Rev. And the terrible conflict there was between the church of Christ and the powers of the Heathen empire before Constantine's time, is there, in verse 7, represented by the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels: "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought, and the dragon fought and his angels."

2. I would take notice what success the gospel had in the world before the time of Constantine, notwithstanding all this opposition.—Though the learning and power of the Roman empire were so great, and both were employed to the utmost against Christianity to put a stop to it, and to root it out for so long a time, and in so many repeated attempts; yet all was in vain, they could neither root it out, nor put a stop to it.—But still, in spite of all that they could do, the kingdom of Christ wonderfully prevailed, and Satan's Heathen kingdom mouldered and consumed away before it, agreeably to the words of the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool." And it was very observable that, for the most part, the more they persecuted the church, the more it increased; insomuch that it became a common saying, The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Herein the church of Christ proved to be like a palm tree; of which tree it is remarked, that the greater weight is laid upon it, or hung to its branches, the more it grows and flourishes; on which account probably the church is compared to a palm tree in Cant. vii. 7: "This thy stature is like to a palm tree." Justin Martyr, an eminent father in the Christian church, who lived in the age next after the apostles, in some writings of his, which are yet extant, says, that in his days there was no part of mankind, whether Greeks or barbarians, or by what names soever they were called, even the most rude and unpolished nations, where prayers and thanksgivings were not made to the great Creator of the world, through the name of the crucified Jesus. Tertullian, another eminent father in the Christian church, who lived in the beginning of the following age, in some of his writings which are yet extant, sets forth how that in his day the Christian religion had extended itself to the utmost bounds of the then known world, in which he reckons Britain, the country of our forefathers; and thence demonstrates, that the kingdom of Christ was then more extensive than any of the four great monarchies; and moreover says, that though the Christians were as strangers of no long standing, yet they had filled all places of the Roman dominions, their cities, islands, castles, corporations, councils, armies, tribes, the palace, senate and courts of judicature; only they had left to the Heathen their temples; and that if they should all agree to retire out of the Roman empire, the world would be amazed at the solitude and desolation that would ensue upon it

there would be so few left; and that the Christians were enough to be able easily to defend themselves, if they were disposed to rise up in arms against the Heathen magistrates. And Pliny, a Heathen who lived in those days, says multitudes of each sex, every age and quality, were become Christians; this superstition, says he, having infected and overrun not the city only, but towns and countries, the temples and sacrifices are generally desolate and forsaken.

And it was remarked by both Heathen and Christian writers in those days, that the famous Heathen oracles in their temples, where princes and others for many past ages had been wont to inquire and receive answers with an audible voice from their gods, which were indeed answers from the devil; I say, those oracles were now silenced and struck dumb, and gave no more answers; and particularly the oracle at Delphos, which was the most famous Heathen oracle in the whole world, which both Greeks and Romans used to consult, began to cease to give any answers, even from the birth of Christ; and the false deity who was worshipped, and used to give answers from his oracle in that temple being once inquired of why he did not now give answers as he was wont to do, made this reply, as several Heathen historians who lived about those times relate: There is a Hebrew boy, says he, who is king of the gods, who has commanded me to leave this house, and be gone to hell, and therefore you are to expect no more answers. And many of the Heathen writers who lived about that time speak much of the oracles being silenced, as a thing at which they wondered, not knowing what the cause should be. Plutarch, a Heathen writer of those times, wrote a particular treatise about it, which is still extant. And Porphyry, one of the Heathen writers before mentioned, who opposed the Christian religion, in his writings has these words: "It is no wonder if the city for these so many years has been overrun with sickness; Esculapius, and the rest of the gods, having withdrawn their converse with men; for since Jesus began to be worshipped, no man has received any public help or benefit by the gods."

Thus did the kingdom of Christ prevail against the kingdom of Satan.

3. I now proceed to take notice of the peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress just before Constantine the Great came to the throne. This distress they suffered under the tenth Heathen persecution, which, as it was the last, so it was by far the heaviest and most severe. The church before this, after the ceasing of the ninth persecution, had enjoyed a time of quietness for about forty years together; but abusing their liberty, began to grow cold and lifeless in religion, and carnal, and contentions prevailed among them; by which they offended God to suffer this dreadful trial to come upon them. And Satan having lost ground so much, notwithstanding all his attempts, now seemed to bestir himself with more than ordinary rage. Those who were then in authority set themselves with the utmost violence to root out Christianity, by burning all Bibles, and destroying all Christians; and therefore they did not stand to try or convict them in a formal process, but fell upon them wherever they could; sometimes setting fire to houses where multitudes of them were assembled, and burning them all together; and at other times slaughtering multitudes together; so that sometimes their persecutors were quite spent with the labor of killing and tormenting them; and in some populous places, so many were slain together, that the blood ran like torrents. It is related, that seventeen thousand martyrs were slain in one month's time; and that during the continuance of this persecution, in the province of Egypt alone, no less than one hundred and forty-four thousand Christians died by the violence of their persecutors, besides 700,000 that died through the fatigues of banishment, or the public works to which they were condemned.

This persecution lasted for ten years together; and as it exceeded all foregoing persecutions in the number of martyrs, so it exceeded them in the variety and multitude of inventions of torture and cruelty. Some authors who lived at that time, say, they were innumerable, and exceed all account and expression.

This persecution in particular was very severe in England; and this is that persecution which was foretold in Rev. vi. 9, 10: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

And at the end of the ten years, during which this persecution continued, the Heathen persecutors thought they had finished their work, and boasted that they had utterly destroyed the name and superstition of the Christians, and had restored and propagated the worship of the gods.

Thus it was the darkest time with the Christian church just before the break of day. They were brought to the greatest extremity just before God appeared for their glorious deliverance, as the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt was the most severe and cruel, just before their deliverance by the hand of Moses. Their enemies thought they had swallowed them up just before their destruction, as it was with Pharaoh and his host, when they had hemmed in the children of Israel at the Red Sea

4. I come now, in the fourth place, to the great revolution which was in the world in the days of Constantine, which was in many respects like Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven, to save his people and judge the world. The people of Rome being weary of the government of those tyrants to whom they had lately been subject, sent to Constantine, who was then in the city of York in England, to come and take the throne. And he being encouraged, as is said, by a vision of a pillar of light in the heavens, in the form of a cross, in the sight of his whole army, with this inscription, *Τουτω νικα, In this overcome;* and the night following, by Christ's appearing to him in a dream with the same cross in his hand, who directed him to make a cross like that to be his royal standard, that his army might fight under that banner, and assured him that he should overcome. Accordingly he did, and overcame his enemies, and took possession of the imperial throne, and embraced the Christian religion, and was the first Christian emperor that ever reigned. He came to the throne about 320 years after Christ. There are several things which I would take notice of which attended or immediately followed Constantine's coming to the throne.

(1.) The Christian church was thereby wholly delivered from persecution. Now the day of her deliverance came after such a dark night of affliction. Weeping had continued for a night, but now deliverance and joy came in the morning. Now God appeared to judge his people, and repented himself for his servants when he saw their power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left. Christians had no persecutions now to fear. Their persecutors now were all put down, and their rulers were some of them Christians like themselves.

(2.) God now appeared to execute terrible judgments on their enemies. Remarkable are the accounts which history gives us of the fearful ends to which the Heathen emperors and princes, and generals, and captains, and other great men came, who had exerted themselves in persecuting the Christians; dying miserably, one and another, under exquisite torments of body, and horrors of conscience, with a most visible hand of God upon them. So that what now came to pass might very fitly be compared to their hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains.

(3.) Heathenism now was in a great measure abolished throughout the Roman empire. Images were now destroyed and Heathen temples pulled down. Images of gold and silver were melted down and coined into money. Some of the chief of their idols, which were curiously wrought, were brought to Constantinople, and there drawn with ropes up and down the streets for the people to behold and laugh at. The Heathen priests were dispersed and banished.

(4.) The Christian church was brought into a state of great peace and prosperity. Now all Heathen magistrates were put down, and only Christians were advanced to places of authority all over the empire. They had now Christian presidents, Christian governors, Christian judges and officers, instead of their old Heathenish ones. Constantine set himself to put honor upon Christian bishops or ministers, and to build and adorn churches; and now large and beautiful Christian churches were erected in all parts of the world, instead of the old Heathen temples.

This revolution was the greatest revolution and change in the face of things that ever came to pass in the world since the flood Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the Heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God, in the strongest dominion that ever he had, even the Roman empire. This was a remarkable accomplishment of Jer. x. 11: "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." The chief part of the world was now brought utterly to cast off their old gods and their old religion, to which they had been accustomed much longer than any of their histories give an account of. They had been accustomed to worship the gods so long that they knew not any beginning of it. It was formerly spoken of as a thing unknown for a nation to change their gods, Jer. ii. 10, 11, but now the greater part of the nations of the known world were brought to cast off all their former gods. That multitude of gods that they worshipped were all forsaken. Thousands of them were cast away for the worship of the true God, and Christ the only Saviour: and there was a most remarkable fulfilment of that in Isa. ii. 17, 18, "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish." And since that it has come to pass, that those gods that were once so famous in the world, as Jupiter, and Saturn, and Minerva, and Juno, &c., are only heard of as things which were of old. They have no temples, no altars, no worshippers, and have not had for many hundred years.

Now is come the end of the old Heathen world in the principal part of it, the Roman empire. And this great revolution and change of the state of the world, with that terrible destruction of the great men who had been persecutors, is compared in Rev. vi. to the end of the world, and Christ coming to judgment; and is what is most immediately signified under the sixth seal, which followed upon the souls under the altar crying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" This vision of the sixth seal, by the general consent of divines and expositors, has respect to this downfall of the Heathen Roman empire; though it has a more remote respect to the day of judgment, or this was a type of it. The day of judgment cannot be what is immediately intended; because we have an account of many events which were to come to pass under the seventh seal, and so were to follow after those of the sixth seal.

What came to pass now is also represented by the devil's being cast out of heaven to the earth. In his great strength and glory, in that mighty Roman

empire, he had as it were exalted his throne up to heaven. But now he fell like lightning from heaven, and was confined to the earth. His kingdom was confined to the meaner and more barbarous nations, or to the lower parts of the world of mankind. This is the event foretold, Rev. xii. 9, &c.: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," &c. Satan tempted Christ, and promised to give him the glory of the kingdoms of the world; but now he is obliged to give it to him even against his will. This was a glorious fulfilment of that promise which God made to his Son, that we have an account of in Isa. liii. 12: "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This was a great fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the glorious time of the gospel, and particularly of the prophecies of Daniel. Now the kingdom of heaven is come in a glorious degree. It pleased the Lord God of heaven to set up a kingdom on the ruins of Satan's kingdom. And such success is there of the purchase of Christ's redemption, and such honor does the Father put upon Christ for the disgrace he suffered when on earth. And now see to what a height that glorious building is erected, which had been building ever since the fall.

Inference. From what has been said of the success of the gospel from Christ's ascension to the time of Constantine, we may deduce a strong argument of the truth of the Christian religion, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ is really from God. This wonderful success of it which has been spoken of, and the circumstances of it which have been mentioned, are a strong argument of it several ways.

1. We may gather from what has been said, that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing the world to the knowledge of the true God. That those are no gods whom the Heathen worshipped, and that there is but one only God, is what, now since the gospel has so taught us, we can see to be truth by our own reason: it is plainly agreeable to the light of nature: it can be easily shown by reason to be demonstrably true. The very Deists themselves acknowledge that it can be demonstrated, that there is one God, and but one, who has made and governs the world. But now it is evident that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing men to the knowledge of this truth: it was not the instructions of philosophers. They tried in vain;—"The world by wisdom knew not God." Till the gospel and the Holy Scriptures came abroad in the world, all the world lay in ignorance of the true God, and in the greatest darkness with respect to the things of religion, embracing the absurdest opinions and practices, which all civilized nations now acknowledge to be childish fooleries. And so they lay one age after another, and nothing proved effectual to enlighten them. The light of nature, and their own reason, and all the wisdom of learned men, signified nothing till the Scriptures came. But when these came abroad, they were successful to bring the world to an acknowledgment of the one only true God, and to worship and serve him.

And hence it is that all that part of the world which now does own one only true God, Christians, Jews, Mahometans, and even Deists too, originally came by the knowledge of him. It is owing to this that they are not in general at this day left in Heathenish darkness. They have it all, either immediately from

the Scriptures, or by tradition from their fathers, who had it first from the Scriptures. And doubtless those who now despise the Scriptures, and boast of the strength of their own reason, as being sufficient to lead into the knowledge of the one true God, if the gospel had never come abroad in the world to enlighten their forefathers, would have been as sottish and brutish idolaters as the world in general was before the gospel came abroad. The Mahometans, who own but one true God, at first borrowed the notion from the Scriptures: for the first Mahometans had been educated in the Christian religion, and apostatized from it. And this is evidential, that the Scriptures were designed of God to be the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, rather than human reason, or any thing else. For it is unreasonable to suppose, that the gospel, and that only, which God never designed as the proper means for obtaining this effect, should actually obtain it, and that after human reason, which he designed as the proper means, had been tried for a great many ages without any effect. If the Scriptures be not the word of God, then they are nothing but darkness and delusion, yea, the greatest delusion that ever was. Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that God in his providence would make use of falsehood and delusion, and that only, to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, and that no part of it should be brought to the knowledge of him any other way?

2. The gospel's prevailing as it did against such powerful opposition, plainly shows the hand of God. The Roman government, that did so violently set itself to hinder the success of the gospel, and to subdue the church of Christ, was the most powerful human government that ever was in the world; and not only so, but they seemed as it were to have the church in their hands. The Christians were mostly their subjects, under their command, and never took up arms to defend themselves: they did not gather together, and stand in their own defence; they armed themselves with nothing but patience, and such like spiritual weapons: and yet this mighty power could not conquer them; but, on the contrary, Christianity conquered them. The Roman empire had subdued the world; they had subdued many mighty and potent kingdoms; they subdued the Grecian monarchy, when they were not their subjects, and made the utmost resistance; and yet they could not conquer the church which was in their hands; but, on the contrary, were subdued, and finally triumphed over by the church.

3. No other sufficient cause can possibly be assigned of this propagation of the gospel, but only God's own power. Nothing else can be devised as the reason of it but this. There was certainly some reason. Here was a great and wonderful effect, the most remarkable change that ever was in the face of the world of mankind since the flood; and this effect was not without some cause. Now, what other cause can be devised but only the divine power? It was not the outward strength of the instruments which were employed in it. At first, the gospel was preached only by a few fishermen, who were without power and worldly interest to support them. It was not their craft and policy that produced this wonderful effect; for they were poor illiterate men. It was not the agreeableness of the story they had to tell to the notions and principles of mankind. This was no pleasant fable: a crucified God and Saviour was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness It was not the agreeableness of their doctrines to the dispositions of men for nothing is more contrary to the corruptions of men than the pure doctrines of the gospel. This effect therefore can have proceeded from no other cause than the power and agency of God: and if the power of God

was what was exercised to cause the gospel to prevail, then the gospel is his word; for surely God does not use his almighty power to promote a mere imposture and delusion.

4. This success is agreeable to what Christ and his apostles foretold Matt. xvi. 18, "Upon this rock will I build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." John xii. 24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." And verses 31, 32, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John xvi. 8, "When he (the Comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment—because the prince of this world is judged."

So the Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. chap. i. 21—28, declares, how that after the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; and that God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. If any man foretells a thing, very likely in itself to come to pass, from causes which can be foreseen, it is no great argument of a revelation from God: but when a thing is foretold which is very unlikely ever to come to pass, is entirely contrary to the common course of things, and yet it does come to pass just agreeable to the prediction, this is a strong argument that the prediction was from God.

Thus the consideration of the manner of the propagation and success of the gospel during the time which has been spoken of, affords great evidence that the Scriptures are the word of God.

III. I am now to show how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on from the time of the overthrow of the Heathen Roman empire in the time of Constantine the Great till the fall of Antichrist, and the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, which is the third great dispensation, which is in Scripture compared to Christ's coming to judgment. This is a period wherein many great and wonderful things are brought to pass. Herein is contained a long series of wonders of divine Providence towards the Christian church. The greater part of the book of Revelation is taken up in foretelling the events of this period.

The success of Christ's purchase of redemption in this period, appears mainly at the close of it, when Antichrist comes to fall, when there will be a far more glorious success of the gospel than ever was before; and that long series of events which are before, seem to be only to prepare the way for it. And in order to a more clear view of the great works of God in accomplishing the success of Christ's redemption, and our seeing the glory of them, it will be necessary, as we have done in the foregoing periods, to consider not only the success itself, but the opposition made to it, and the great works of Satan in this period against the church and kingdom of Christ: and therefore, in taking a view of this period, I would take notice of events which may be referred to either of these heads, viz., either to the head of Satan's opposition to the success of Christ's redemption, or to the head of the success of Christ's redemption: and for the more orderly consideration of the events of this period, I would divide it into these four parts: the first reaching from the destruction of the Heathen empire to the rise of Antichrist; the second, from the rise of Antichrist to the Reformation in Luther's time; the third, from thence to the present time

the fourth, from the present time till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is destroyed.

1*st*. I would consider the events of the first part of this period, reaching from the destruction of the Heathen empire to the rise of Antichrist. And here, *first*, I would take notice of the opposition Satan made in this space of time to the church: and, *secondly*, the success that the gospel had in it.

1. The opposition. Satan being cast out of his old Heathen empire, the great red dragon, after so sore a conflict with Michael and his angels, for the greater part of three hundred years being at last entirely routed and vanquished, so that no place was found any more in heaven for him, but he was cast down, as it were, from heaven to the earth; yet does not give over his opposition to the woman, the church of Christ, concerning which all this conflict had been. But he is still in a rage, and renews his attempts, and has recourse to new devices against the church. The serpent, after he is cast out of heaven to the earth, casts out of his mouth water as a flood, to cause the woman to be carried away of the flood. The opposition that he made to the church of Christ before the rise of Antichrist, was principally of two sorts. It was either by corrupting the church of Christ with heresies, or by new endeavors to restore Paganism.

(1.) I would observe, that after the destruction of the Heathen Roman empire, Satan infested the church with heresies. Though there had been so glorious a work of God in delivering the church from her Heathen persecutors, and overthrowing the Heathen empire; yet the days of the church's travail not being ended, and the set time of her prosperity not being yet come, as being what was to succeed the fall of Antichrist, therefore the peace and prosperity which the church enjoyed in Constantine's time, was but very short: it was a respite, which gave the church a time of peace and silence, as it were *for half an hour*, wherein the four angels held the four winds from blowing, till the servants of God should be sealed in their foreheads. But the church soon began to be greatly infested with heresies; the two principal, and those which did most infest the church, were the Arian and Pelagian heresies.

The Arians began soon after Constantine came to the throne. They denied the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and maintained that they were but mere creatures. This heresy increased more and more in the church, and prevailed like a flood, which threatened to overflow all, and entirely to carry away the church, insomuch that before that age was out, that is, before the fourth century after Christ was finished, the greater part of the Christian church were become Arians. There were some emperors, the successors of Constantine, who were Arians; so that the Arians being the prevailing party, and having the civil authority on their side, did raise a great persecution against the true church of Christ; so that this heresy might well be compared to a flood out of the mouth of the serpent, which threatened to overthrow all, and quite carry away the woman.

The Pelagian heresy arose in the beginning of the next century. It began by one *Pelagius*, who was born in Britain: his British name was *Morgan*. He denied original sin, and the influence of the Spirit of God in conversion, and held the power of free will, and many other things of like tendency; and this heresy did for a while greatly infest the church. Pelagius's principal antagonist, who wrote in defence of the orthodox faith, was St. Augustin.

(2.) The other kind of opposition, which Satan made against the church, was in his endeavors to restore Paganism. And his first attempt to restore it in the Roman empire, was by Julian the apostate. Julian was nephew to Con

stantine the Great. When Constantine died he left his empire to his three sons, and when they were dead, Julian the apostate reigned in their stead. He had been a professed Christian; but he fell from Christianity, and turned Pagan; and therefore is called *the apostate*. When he came to the throne, he used his utmost endeavors to overthrow the Christian church, and set up Paganism again in the empire. He put down the Christian magistrates, and set up Heathens in their room: he rebuilt the Heathen temples, and set up the Heathen worship in the empire, and became a most notorious persecutor of the Christians, and, as is thought, against his own light: he used to call Christ, by way of reproach, *the Galilean*. He was killed with a lance in his wars with the Persians. When he saw that he was mortally wounded, he took a handful of his blood, and threw it up towards heaven, crying out, Thou hast overcome, O Galilean. And he is commonly thought by divines, to have committed the unpardonable sin.

Another way that Satan attempted to restore Paganism in the Roman empire, was by *the invasions and conquests of Heathen nations*. For in this space of time that we are upon, the Goths and Vandals, and other Heathen barbarous nations, that dwelt in the north of the Roman empire, invaded the empire, and obtained great conquests, and even overran the empire, and in the fifth century took the city of Rome, and finally subdued and conquered, and took possession of the Western empire, as it was called, or the western half of the empire, and divided it amongst them; divided it into ten kingdoms, with which began the ten horns of the beast; for we are told that the ten horns are ten kings, who should rise in the latter part of the Roman empire: these are also represented by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The invasion and conquests of these Heathen nations are supposed to be foretold in the 8th chapter of Revelation, in what came to pass under the sounding of the four first trumpets. Now these nations, who took possession of the Western empire, were Heathens; so that by their means Heathenism was again for a while restored, after it had been rooted out.

So much for the opposition of Satan against the success of the gospel during this space before the rise of Antichrist. I proceed,

2. To show what success there was of the gospel in this space, notwithstanding this opposition.

(1.) I would observe that the opposition of Satan in those things was baffled. Though the dragon cast out of his mouth such a flood after the woman to carry her away, yet he could not obtain his design; but the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. These heresies which for a while so much prevailed, yet after a while dwindled away, and orthodoxy was again restored: and his attempt by Julian was baffled at his death.

(2.) The gospel, during this space of time, was further propagated amongst many barbarous Heathen nations in the confines of the Roman empire. In the time of Constantine there was a considerable propagation of the gospel in the East Indies, chiefly by the ministry of one Frumentius.—Great numbers of the Iberians, a Heathen people, were converted to Christianity by a Christian woman of eminent piety, whom they had taken captive. And some account is given of several other barbarous nations who were not within the Roman empire, that great numbers of them were brought to receive the gospel by the teaching and example of captives whom they had taken in war. And after this, about the year of Christ, 372, the gospel was propagated among the barbarous people that dwelt in Arabia; as it was also among some of the northern nations; particularly a prince of the country of the Goths about this time be-

came Christian, and a great number of his people with him. Towards the latter end of this century, the gospel was also further propagated among the Persians, and also the Scythians, a barbarous people, that the apostle mentions in Col. iii. 11, "Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free."

And after this, about the year 430, there was a remarkable conversion of a Heathen people, called the *Burgundians*, to the Christian faith. About the same time, in this age, the gospel began to be propagated in Ireland; and the Irish, who till now had been Heathen, began to receive the Christian faith. About the same time it was further propagated among some barbarous people in Scotland, and also in some other places. In the next century to this, one *Zathus*, a Heathen king, who ruled over a people called the *Colchians*, was brought to renounce his Heathenism, and to embrace the Christian religion. Several other barbarous nations are recorded to have renounced Heathenism and embraced Christianity about this time, that I cannot stand to mention.

Thus I have briefly considered the principal events of Providence which concern the success of the gospel of Christ, from Constantine to the rise of Antichrist.

2dly. I come now to the second part of the time from Constantine to the destruction of Antichrist, viz., that which reaches from the rise of Antichrist to the reformation by Luther and others. And this is the darkest and most dismal day that ever the Christian church saw, and probably the darkest that ever it will see. The time of the church's affliction and persecution, as was observed before, is from Christ's resurrection till the destruction of Antichrist, excepting that the day is, as it were, shortened by some intermissions and times of respite, which God gives for the elect's sake. But this time, from the rise of Antichrist till the Reformation, was a space wherein the Christian church was in its greatest depth of depression, and in its darkest time of all. The true church in this space was for many hundred years in a state of great obscurity, like the woman in the wilderness: indeed she was almost hid from sight and observation. In speaking of the events of this space of time, I would, 1, Take notice of the great machinations of the devil against the kingdom of Christ during this time; 2, Show how the church of Christ was upheld during this time.

1. I would take notice of the great works of the devil against the kingdom of Christ during this time. Satan had done great things against the Christian church before, but had been baffled once and again. Michael and his angels had obtained a glorious victory. How terrible was his opposition during the continuance of the Heathen empire; and how glorious was Christ's victory and triumph over him in the time of Constantine! It pleased God now to prepare the way for a yet more glorious victory over him, to suffer him to renew his strength, and to do the utmost that his power and subtlety can help him to; and therefore he suffers him to have a long time to lay his schemes, and to establish his interest, and make his matters strong; and suffers him to carry his designs a great length indeed, almost to the swallowing up of his church; and to exercise a high, and proud, and almost uncontrolled dominion in the world, a long time before Christ finally conquers and subdues, and utterly ruins his visible kingdom on earth, as he will do in the time of the destruction of Antichrist: thus gloriously triumphing over him after he has done the utmost that his power and subtlety can extend to, and showing that he is above him, after he has dealt most proudly, and lifted himself highest of all.

The two great works of the devil which he in this space of time wrought against the kingdom of Christ, are his creating his Antichristian and Mahometan kingdoms, which have been, and still are, two kingdoms of great extent and

strength, both together swallowing up the ancient Roman empire; the kingdom of Antichrist swallowing up the Western empire, and Satan's Mahometan kingdom the Eastern empire. As the Scriptures in the book of the Revelation represent it, it is in the destruction of these that the glorious victory of Christ, at the introduction of the glorious times of the church, will mainly consist. And here let us briefly observe how Satan erects and maintains these two great kingdoms of his in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

(1.) With respect to the kingdom of Antichrist. This seems to be the masterpiece of all the contrivances of the devil against the kingdom of Christ, and is evidently so spoken of in Scripture, and therefore Antichrist is the man of sin, or *that* man of sin, 2. Thess. ii 3. He is so called emphatically, as though he were so eminently. So he is called *Antichrist*, which signifies the opponent or adversary of Christ. Not that he is the only opponent of Christ; there were many others besides him. The Apostle John observes that in his days there were many Antichrists; but yet this is called *the Antichrist*, as though there were none but he, because he was so eminently, and above all others. So this contrivance of the devil, is called *the mystery of iniquity*, 2 Thess. ii. 7. And we find no enemy of Christ one half so much spoken of in the prophecies of Revelation as this; and the destruction of no enemy is spoken of as so glorious and happy for the church. The craft and subtlety of the devil, above all, appears in this work of his; as might be shown, were it not that it would consume too much time.

This is a contrivance of the devil to turn the ministry of the Christian church into a ministry of the devil, and to turn these angels of the churches into fallen angels, and so into devils. And in the tyranny and superstition, and idolatry, and persecution, which he sets up, he contrives to make an image of ancient Paganism, and more than to restore what was lost in the empire by the overthrow of Paganism in the time of Constantine: so that by these means the head of the beast which was wounded unto death in Constantine, has his deadly wound healed in Antichrist, Rev. xiii. 3. And the dragon that formerly reigned in the Heathen Roman empire, being cast out thence, after the beast with seven heads and ten horns rises up out of the sea, gives him his power, and seat, and great authority; and all the world wonders after the beast.

I am far from pretending to determine the time when the reign of Antichrist began, which is a point that has been so much controverted among divines and expositors. It is certain that the 1260 days or years, which are so often in Scripture mentioned as the time of the continuance of Antichrist's reign, did not commence before the year of Christ 479; because if they did, they would have ended, and Antichrist would have fallen before now. But I shall not pretend to determine precisely how long it was after this that that period began. The rise of Antichrist was gradual. The Christian church corrupted itself in many things presently after Constantine's time, growing more and more superstitious in its worship, by degrees bringing in many ceremonies into the worship of God, till at length they brought in the worship of saints, and set up images in their churches, and the clergy in general, and especially the bishop of Rome, assumed more and more authority to himself. In the primitive times he was only a minister of a congregation; then a standing moderator of a presbytery; then a diocesan bishop; then a metropolitan, which is equivalent to an archbishop; then he was a patriarch, then afterwards he claimed the power of universal bishop over the whole Christian church through the world; wherein he was opposed for a while, but afterwards was confirmed in it by the civil power of the Emperor in the year 606. After that he claimed

the power of a temporal prince; and so was wont to carry two swords, to signify that both the temporal and spiritual sword was his; and claimed more and more authority, till at length he, as Christ's vicegerent on earth, claimed the very same power that Christ would have if he was present on earth, and reigned on his throne, or the same power that belongs to God, and used to be called *God on earth;* and used to be submitted to by all the princes of Christendom. He claimed power to crown princes, and to degrade them at his pleasure; and this power was owned: and it came to that, that kings and emperors used to kiss his feet. The emperors were wont to receive their crowns at his hands, and princes were wont to dread the displeasure of the Pope, as they would dread a thunderbolt from heaven; for if the Pope was pleased to excommunicate a prince, all his subjects were at once freed from their allegiance to him; yea, and obliged not to own him any more, on pain of excommunication; and not only so, but any man might kill him wherever he found him. And further, the Pope was believed to have power to damn men at pleasure; for whoever died under his excommunication, was looked upon as certainly damned. And several emperors were actually deposed, and ejected, and died miserably by his means; and if the people of any state or kingdom did not please him, he had power to lay that state or kingdom under an interdict, which was a sentence pronounced by the Pope against that state or kingdom, whereby all sacred administrations among them could have no validity. There could be no valid baptisms, or sacraments, or prayers, or preachings, or pardons, till that interdict was taken off; so that that people remained, in their apprehension, in a miserable, damnable state, and therefore dreaded it as they would a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven. And in order to execute his wrath on a prince or people with whom the Pope was displeased, other princes must also be put to a great deal of trouble and expense.

And as the Pope and his clergy robbed the people of their ecclesiastical and civil liberties and privileges, so they also robbed them of their estates, and drained all Christendom of their money, and engrossed the most of their riches into their own coffers, by their vast revenues, besides pay for pardons and indulgences, baptisms, and extreme unctions, deliverance out of purgatory, and a hundred other things.—See how well this agrees with the prophecies, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, Dan. vii. 20, 21, Rev. xiii. 6, 7, and chap. 3, 4.

During this time also superstition and ignorance more and more prevailed. The holy Scriptures by degrees were taken out of the hands of the laity, the better to promote the unscriptural and wicked designs of the Pope and the clergy; and instead of promoting knowledge among the people, they industriously promoted ignorance. It was a received maxim among them, that ignorance is the mother of devotion: and so great was the darkness of those times, that learning was almost extinct in the world. The very priests themselves, most of them were barbarously ignorant as to any commendable learning, or any other knowledge than their hellish craft, in oppressing and tyrannizing over the souls of the people. The superstition and wickedness of the church of Rome, kept growing worse and worse till the very time of the Reformation; and the whole Christian world were led away into this great defection, excepting the remains of the Christian church in the Eastern empire that had not been utterly overthrown by the Turks, as the Greek church, and some others, which were also sunk into great darkness and gross superstition, excepting also those few that were the people of God, who are represented by the woman in the wilderness, and God's two witnesses, of which more hereafter.

This is one of those two great kingdoms which the devil in this period

erected in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, and was the greatest and chief I come now,

(2.) To speak of the other, the second, which is in many respects like unto it, viz., his Mahometan kingdom, which is another great kingdom of mighty power and vast extent, set up by Satan against the kingdom of Christ: he set this up in the Eastern empire, as he did that of Antichrist in the Western.

Mahomet was born in the year of Christ 570, in Arabia.—When he was about forty years of age, he began to give forth that he was the great prophet of God, and began to teach his new invented religion, of which he was to be worshipped as the head next under God. He published his Alcoran, which he pretended he received from the angel Gabriel; and being a subtle crafty man, and possessed of considerable wealth, and living among a people who were very ignorant, and greatly divided in their opinions of religious matters, by subtlety and fair promises of a sensual paradise, he gained a number to be his followers, and set up for their prince, and propagated his religion by the sword, and made it meritorious of paradise to fight for him. By which means his party grew, and went on fighting till they conquered and brought over the neighboring countries; and so his party gradually grew till they overran a great part of the world. First, the Saracens, who were some of his followers, and were a people of the country of Arabia, where Mahomet lived, about the year 700, began dreadfully to waste the Roman empire. They overran a great many countries belonging to the empire, and continued their conquests for a long time These are supposed to be meant by the locusts that we read of in the 9th chapter of Revelation.

And then after this the Turks, who were originally another people different from the Saracens, but were followers of Mahomet, conquered all the Eastern empire. They began their empire about the year of Christ 1296, and began to invade Europe in 1300, and took Constantinople, and so became masters of all the Eastern empire in the year 1453, which is near three hundred years ago. And thus all those cities and countries where were those famous churches of old, that we read of in the New Testament, as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, &c., now all became subject to the Turks. And they took possession of Constantinople, which was named after Constantine the Great, being made by him the head city of the Roman empire, whereas Rome had been till then.—These are supposed to be prophesied of by the horsemen in the 9th chapter of Revelation, beginning with the 15th verse. And the remains of the Christians that are in those parts of the world, who are mostly of the Greek church, are in miserable slavery under these Turks, and treated with a great deal of barbarity and cruelty, and are "become" mostly very ignorant and superstitious.

Thus I have shown what great works of Satan were wrought during this space of time in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

2. I come now to show how the church of Christ was upheld through this dark time.—And here,

(1.) It is to be observed, that towards the former part of this space of time, some of the nations of Christendom held out a long time before they complied with the corruptions and usurpations of the church of Rome. Though all the world wondered after the beast, yet all nations did not fall in at once. Many of the principal corruptions of the church of Rome were brought in with a great deal of struggle and opposition; and particularly, when the Pope gave out that he was universal bishop, many churches greatly opposed him in it; and it was a long time before they would yield to his exorbitant claims. And, so when the worship of images was first brought into the churches, there were

many who greatly opposed it, and long held out against it. And so with respect to other corruptions of the church of Rome. Those people that dwelt nearer to the city of Rome complied sooner, but some that were more remote, were a long time before they could be induced to put their necks under the yoke; and particularly ecclesiastical history gives an account, that it was so with great part of the churches in England and Scotland, and France, who retained the ancient purity of doctrine and worship much longer than many others who were nearer the chief seat of Antichrist.

(2.) In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular persons in all parts of Christendom, who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the church of Rome. There is no one age of Antichrist, even in the darkest times of all, but ecclesiastical historians mention a great many by name who manifested an abhorrence of the Pope, and his idolatrous worship, and pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of witnesses through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries; as historians demonstrate, and mention them by name, and give an account of the testimony which they held. Many of them were private persons, and many of them ministers, and some magistrates, and persons of great distinction. And there were numbers in every age who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.

(3.) Besides these particular persons dispersed here and there, there was a certain people called the *Waldenses*, who lived separate from all the rest of the world, who kept themselves pure, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five valleys of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France. The place where they lived was compassed about with those exceeding high mountains called *the Alps*, which were almost impassable. The passage over these mountainous desert countries, was so difficult, that the valleys where this people dwelt were almost inaccessible. There this people lived for many ages, as it were alone, in a state of separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people. And there they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This place in this desert mountainous country, probably was the place especially meant in the 12th chapter of Revelation, 6th verse, as the place prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of Antichrist.

Some of the Popish writers themselves own, that that people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of the Popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, the heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world. It is supposed that this people first betook themselves to this desert secret place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the Heathen persecutions which were before Constantine the Great. And thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent, Rev. xii. 6. And so: verse 14, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place: where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." And the people being settled there, their posterity continued there from age to age afterwards: and being, as it were, by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated from the rest of the world, never partook of the overflowing corruption.

These especially were those virgins who were not defiled with the rest of women, or when other women prostituted themselves and were defiled; but they kept themselves pure for Christ alone: they followed the Lamb, their

spiritual husband, whithersoever he went: they followed him into this hideous wilderness, Rev. xiv. 4, 5.—Their doctrine and their worship, as there still remain accounts of them, appear to be the same with the Protestant doctrine and worship; and by the confession of Popish writers, they were a people remarkable for the strictness of their lives, for charity and other Christian virtues. They lived in external poverty in this hideous country; but they chose this rather than to comply with the great corruptions of the rest of the world.

They living in so secret a place, it was a long time before they seem to have been much taken notice of by the Romanists; but at last falling under observation, they went out in mighty armies against them, and fell upon them with insatiable cruelty, barbarously massacreing and putting to death men, women, and children, with all imaginable tortures; and so continued persecuting them with but little intermission for several hundred years; by which means many of them were driven out of their old habitations in the valleys of Piedmont, and fled into all parts of Europe, carrying with them their doctrine, to which many were brought over. So their persecutors could not by all their cruelties extirpate the church of God; so fulfilling his word, "that the gates of hell should not prevail against it."

(4.) Towards the latter part of this dark time, several noted divines openly appeared to defend the truth, and bear testimony against the corruptions of the church of Rome, and had many followers. The first and principal of these was a certain English divine, whose name was *John Wickliff*, who appeared about 140 years before the Reformation, and strenuously opposed the Popish religion, and taught the same doctrine that the Reformers afterwards did, and had many followers in England. He was hotly persecuted in his life-time, yet died in peace; and after he was buried, his bones were dug up by his persecutors, and burnt. His followers remained in considerable numbers in England till the Reformation, and were cruelly persecuted, and multitudes put to death for their religion.

Wickliff had many disciples and followers, not only in England, but in other parts of Europe, whither his books were carried, and particularly in Bohemia, among whom were two eminent divines; the name of one was *John Huss*, the other's name was *Jerom*, a divine belonging to Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. These strenuously opposed the church of Rome, and had many who adhered to them. They were both burnt by the Papists for their doctrine; and their followers in Bohemia were cruelly persecuted, but never extirpated till the Reformation.

Thus having gone through this dark time of the church, which is the second part of the space from Constantine the Great to the destruction of Antichrist, I come now,

3*dly*. To the third part, viz., that which begins with the Reformation, and reaches to the present time. And here I would, 1, Speak of the Reformation itself; 2, The opposition which the devil has made to the Reformed church; 3, What success there has lately been of the gospel in one place and another; 4, What the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of his purchase.

1. Here the first thing to be taken notice of is the Reformation. This was begun about 220 years ago: first in Saxony in Germany, by the preaching of Martin Luther, who, being stirred in his spirit, to see the horrid practices of the Popish clergy, and having set himself diligently to inquire after truth, by the study of the holy Scriptures, and the writings of the ancient fathers of the church, very openly and boldly decried the corruptions and usurpations of the Romish

church in his preaching and writings, and had soon a great number that fell in with him; among whom was the Elector of Saxony, the sovereign prince of the country to which he belonged. This greatly alarmed the church of Rome; and it did as it were rally all its force to oppose him and his doctrine, and fierce wars and persecutions were raised against it: but yet it went on, by the labors of Luther and Melancthon in Germany, and Zuinglius in Switzerland, and other eminent divines, who were cotemporary with Luther, and fell in with him; and particularly Calvin, who appeared something after the beginning of the Reformation, but was one of the most eminent Reformers.

Many of the princes of Germany soon fell in with the Reformed religion, and many other states and kingdoms in Europe; as England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, great part of France, Poland, Lithuania, Switzerland and the Low Countries. So that it is thought, that heretofore about half Christendom were of the Protestant religion; though, since, the Papists have gained ground: so that the Protestants now have not so great a proportion.

Thus God began gloriously to revive his church again, and advance the kingdom of his Son, after such a dismal night of darkness as had been before from the rise of Antichrist to that time. There had been many endeavors used, by the witnesses for the truth, for a reformation before. But now, when God's appointed time was come, his work was begun, and went on with a swift and wonderful progress; and Antichrist, who had been rising higher and higher from his very first beginning till that time, was swiftly and suddenly brought down, and fell half way towards utter ruin, and never has been able to rise again to his former height. A certain very late expositor (Mr. Lowman) who explains the five first vials, in the 16th chapter of Revelation, with greater probability perhaps than any who went before him, explains the fifth vial, which was poured out on the seat of the beast, of what came to pass in the Reformation; explaining the four preceding vials of the certain great judgments God brought on the Popish dominions before the Reformation. It is said, Rev. xvi. 10, that "the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast;" in the original, it is *the throne of the beast;* "and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." He poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast, i. e., on the authority and dominion of the Pope: so the word *throne* is often used in Scripture; so 1 Kings i. 37, "As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even be he so with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David;" i. e., make his dominion and authority greater, and his kingdom more glorious.

But now in the Reformation, the vials of God's wrath were poured out on the throne of the beast. His throne was terribly shaken and diminished. The Pope's authority and dominion was greatly diminished, both as to the extent and degree. He lost, as was said before, about half his dominions. And besides, since the Reformation the Pope has lost great part of that authority, even in the Popish dominions, which he had before. He is not regarded, and his power is dreaded in no measure as it was wont to be. The powers of Europe have learned not to put their necks under the Pope's feet, as formerly they were wont to do. So that he is as a lion that has lost his teeth, in comparison of what he was once. And when the Pope and his clergy, enraged to see their authority so diminished at the Reformation, laid their heads together, and joined their forces to destroy the Reformation; their policy, which was wont to serve them so well, failed; they found their kingdom full of darkness, so that they could do nothing, any more than the Egyptians, who rose not from their seats

for three days. The Reformed church was defended as Lot and the angels were in Sodom, by smiting the Sodomites with darkness or with blindness that they could not find the door. God then fulfilled that in Job v. 11, &c, "To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night. But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty."

Those proud enemies of God's people, being so disappointed, and finding themselves so unable to uphold their own dominion and authority, this made them as it were to gnaw their tongues for pain, or bite their tongues for mere rage.

2. I proceed therefore to show what opposition has been made to this success of Christ's purchase by the Reformation, by Satan and his adherents; observing, as we go along, how far they have been baffled, and how far they have been successful.

The opposition which Satan has made against the Reformed religion has been principally of the following kinds, viz., that which was made, 1, by a general council of the church of Rome; 2, by secret plots and devices; 3, by open wars and invasions; 4, by cruel oppression and persecution; and 5, by bringing in corrupt opinions.

(1.) The first opposition that I shall take notice of is that which was made by the clergy of the church of Rome uniting together in a general council This was the famous council of Trent, which the Pope called a little while after the Reformation. In that council, there met together six cardinals, thirty-two archbishops, two hundred and twenty-eight bishops, besides innumerable others of the Romish clergy. This council, in all their sittings, including the times of intermission between their sittings, was held for twenty-five years together. Their main business all this while was to concert measures for establishing the church of Rome against the Reformers, and for destroying the Reformation But it proved that they were not able to perform their enterprise. The Reformed church, notwithstanding their holding so great a council, and for so long a time together against it, remained, and remains still. So that the counsel of the froward is carried headlong, and their kingdom is full of darkness, and they weary themselves to find the door.

Thus the church of Rome, instead of repenting of their deeds, when such clear light was held forth to them by Luther, and other servants of God, the Reformers, does, by general agreement in council, persist in their vile corruptions and wickedness, and obstinate opposition to the kingdom of Christ. The doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, which were chiefly condemned by the Reformed, were confirmed by the decrees of their council; and the corruptions, in many respects were carried higher than ever before; and they uttered blasphemous reproaches and curses against the Reformed religion, and all the Reformed church was excommunicated and anathematized by them; and so, according to the prophecy, "they blasphemed God." Thus God hardened their hearts, intending to destroy them.

(2.) The Papists have often endeavored to overthrow the Reformation by secret plots and conspiracies. So there were many plots against the life of Luther. The Papists were engaged in contriving to despatch him, and to put him out of their way; and he, as he was a very bold man, often very much exposed himself in the cause of Christ: but yet they were wonderfully prevent-

ed from hurting him, and he at last died in his bed in peace. And so there have been from time to time innumerable schemes secretly laid for the overthrow of the Protestant religion; among which, that which seems to be most considerable, and which seemed to be the most likely to have taken effect was that which was in the time of King James II. of England, which is within the memory of many of us. There was at that time a strong conspiracy between the King of England and Lewis XIV. of France, who were both Papists, to extirpate the Northern heresy, as they called the Protestant religion, not only out of England, but out of all Europe; and had laid their schemes so, that they seemed to be almost sure of their purpose. They looked upon it, that if the Reformed religion were suppressed in the British realms, and in the Netherlands, which were the strongest part, and chief defence of the Protestant interest, they should have easy work with the rest. And just as their matters seemed to be come to a head, and their enterprise ripe for execution, God, in his providence, suddenly dashed all their schemes in pieces by the Revolution, at the coming in of King William and Queen Mary; by which all their designs were at an end; and the Protestant interest was more strongly established, by the crown of England's being established in the Protestant house of Hanover, and a Papist being, by the constitution of the nation, forever rendered incapable of wearing the crown of England. Thus they groped in darkness at noon-day as in the night, and their hands could not perform their enterprise, and their kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

After this, there was a deep design laid to bring the same thing to pass in the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, by the bringing in of the Popish pretender, which was no less suddenly and totally baffled by divine Providence; as the plots against the Reformation, by bringing in the pretender, have been from time to time.

(3.) The Reformation has often been opposed by open wars and invasions. So in the beginning of the Reformation, the Emperor of Germany, to suppress the Reformation, declared war with the Duke of Saxony, and the principal men who favored and received Luther's doctrine. But they could not obtain their end; they could not suppress the Reformation. For the same end, the King of Spain maintained a long war with Holland and the Low Countries in the century before last. But those cruel wars issued greatly to the disadvantage of the Romish church, as they occasioned the setting up of one of the most powerful Protestant states in Europe, which, next to Great Britain, is the chief barrier of the Protestant religion. And the design of the Spanish invasion of England in Queen Elizabeth's time, was to suppress and root out the Reformed religion; and therefore they brought in their fleet all manner of instruments of cruelty wherewith to torture the Protestants who would not renounce the Protestant religion. But their design was totally baffled, and their mighty fleet in a great measure ruined.

(4.) Satan has opposed the Reformation with cruel persecutions. The persecutions with which the Protestants in one kingdom and another have been persecuted by the church of Rome, have in many respects been far beyond any of the Heathen persecutions which were before Constantine the Great, and beyond all that ever were before. So that Antichrist has proved the greatest and cruelest enemy to the church of Christ that ever was in the world, in this, as well as in all other respects; agreeably to the description given of the church of Rome, Rev. xvii. 6, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." And chap. xviii. 24, "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

The Heathen persecutions had been very dreadful; but now persecution by the church of Rome was improved and studied, and cultivated as an art or science. Such ways of afflicting and tormenting were found out, as are beyond the thought and invention of ordinary men, or men who are unstudied in those things, and beyond the invention of all former ages. And that persecution might be managed the more effectually, there were certain societies of men established in various parts of the Popish dominions, whose business it should be to study, and improve, and practise persecution in its highest perfection, which are those societies called *the courts of inquisition*. A reading of the particular histories of the Romish persecution, and their courts of inquisition, will give that idea which a few words cannot express.

When the Reformation began, the beast with seven heads and ten horns began to rage in a dreadful manner. After the Reformation, the church of Rome renewed its persecution of the poor Waldenses, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation there were terrible persecutions in various parts of Germany; and especially in Bohemia, which lasted for thirty years together; in which so much blood was shed for the sake of religion, that a certain writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary, were in like manner deluged with Protestant blood.

By means of these and other cruel persecutions, the Protestant religion was in a great measure suppressed in Bohemia, and the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were as it were Protestant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was foretold of the little horn, Dan. vii. 20, 21, "—and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." And what was foretold of the beast having seven heads and ten horns, Rev. xiii. 7, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

Also Holland and the other Low Countries were for many years a scene of nothing but the most affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of Protestants, under the merciless hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in subjection. But in this persecution the devil in a great measure failed in his purpose; as it issued in a great part of the Netherlands casting off the Spanish yoke, and setting up a wealthy and powerful Protestant state, to the great defence of the Protestant cause ever since.

France also is another country, which since the Reformation, in some respects, perhaps more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the Protestants there. After many cruelties had been exercised towards the Protestants in that kingdom, there was begun a persecution of them in the year 1571, in the reign of Charles IX, King of France. It began with a cruel massacre, wherein 70,000 Protestants were slain in a few days' time, as the king boasted: and in all this persecution, he slew as is supposed, 300,000 martyrs. And it is reckoned, that about this time, within thirty years, there were martyred in this kingdom, for the Protestant religion, 39 princes, 148 counts, 234 barons, 147,518 gentlemen, and 760,000 of the common people.

But all these persecutions were, for exquisite cruelty, far exceeded by those which followed in the reign of Lewis XIV., which indeed are supposed to exceed all others that ever have been; and being long continued, by reason of the long reign of that king, almost wholly extirpated the Protestant religion

out of that kingdom, where had been before a multitude of famous Protestant churches all over the kingdom. Thus it was given to the beast to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

There was also a terrible persecution in England in Queen Mary's time, wherein great numbers in all parts of the kingdom were burnt alive. And after this, though the Protestant religion has been for the most part established by law in England, yet there have been very severe persecutions by the high-churchmen, who symbolize in many things with the Papists. Such a persecution was that which occasioned our forefathers to flee from their native country, and to come and settle in this land, which was then a hideous howling wilderness. And these persecutions were continued with little intermission till King William came to the throne.

Scotland has also been the scene, for many years together, of cruelties and blood by the hands of high-churchmen, such as came very little short of the Popish persecution in Queen Mary's days, and in many things much exceeded it, which continued till they were delivered by King William.

Ireland has been as it were overwhelmed with Protestant blood. In the days of King Charles I. of England, above 200,000 Protestants were cruelly murdered in that kingdom in a few days; the Papists, by a secret agreement, rising all over the kingdom at an appointed time, intending to kill every Protestant in the kingdom at once.

Besides these there have been very cruel persecutions in Italy, and Spain, and other places, which I shall not stand to relate.

Thus did the devil and his great minister Antichrist, rage with such violence and cruelty against the church of Christ! And thus did the whore of Babylon make herself drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus! And thus by these persecutions, the Protestant church has been much diminished! Yet with all have they not been able to prevail; but still the Protestant church is upheld, and Christ fulfils his promise, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church."

(5.) The last kind of opposition that Satan has made to the Reformation is by corrupt opinions. Satan has opposed the light of the gospel which shone forth in the Reformation with many corrupt opinions, which he has brought in and propagated in the world.

And here, in the first place, the first opposition of this kind was by raising up the sect of the Anabaptists, which began four or five years after the Reformation itself began.—This sect, as it first appeared in Germany, were vastly more extravagant than the present Anabaptists are in England. They held a great many exceeding corrupt opinions. One tenet of theirs was, that there ought to be no civil authority, and so that it was lawful to rebel against civil authority. And on this principle, they refused to submit to magistrates, or any human laws; and gathered together in vast armies, to defend themselves against their civil rulers, and put all Germany into an uproar, and so kept it for some time.

The next opposition of this kind to the Reformation was that which was made by enthusiasts. Those are called enthusiasts who falsely pretend to be inspired by the Holy Ghost as the prophets were. These began in Germany about ten years after Luther began the Reformation; and there arose various sects of them who were exceeding wild and extravagant. The followers of these are the Quakers in England, and other parts of the British dominions.

The next to these were the Socinians, who had their beginning chiefly in Poland, by the teaching of two men; the name of the one was *Lælius Socinus*

of the other *Faustus Socinus*. They held that Christ was a mere man, and denied Christ's satisfaction, and most of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. Their heresy has since been greatly propagated among Protestants in Poland, Germany, Holland, England, and other places.

After these arose the Arminians. These first appeared in Holland about 130 years ago. They take their name from a Dutchman, whose name was *Jacobus Van Harmin*, which, turned into Latin is called *Jacobus Arminius;* and from his name the whole sect are called *Arminians*. This Jacobus Arminius was first a minister at Amsterdam, and then a professor of divinity in the University of Leyden. He had many followers in Holland. There was upon this a synod of all the Reformed churches called together, who met at Dort, in Holland. The synod of Dort condemned them; but yet they spread and prevailed. They began to prevail in England in the reign of Charles I., especially in the church of England. The church of England divines before that, were almost universally Calvinists; but since that, Arminianism has gradually more and more prevailed, till they are become almost universally Arminians. And not only so, but Arminianism has greatly prevailed among the Dissenters, and has spread greatly in New England, as well as Old.

Since this, Arianism has been revived. As I told you before, Arianism, a little after Constantine's time, almost swallowed up the Christian world, like a flood out of the mouth of the serpent which threatened to swallow up the woman.—And of late years this heresy has been revived in England, and greatly prevails there, both in the church of England, and among Dissenters. These hold that Christ is but a mere creature; though they grant that he is the greatest of all creatures.

Again, another thing which has of late exceedingly prevailed among Protestants, and especially in England, is Deism. The Deists wholly cast off the Christian religion, and are professed infidels. They are not like the Heretics, Arians, Socinians, and others, who own the Scriptures to be the word of God, and hold the Christian religion to be the true religion, but only deny these and these fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion: they deny the whole Christian religion. Indeed they own the being of God; but deny that Christ was the Son of God, and say he was a mere cheat; and so they say all the prophets and apostles were: and they deny the whole Scripture. They deny that any of it is the word of God. They deny any revealed religion, or any word of God at all; and say that God has given mankind no other light to walk by but their own reason. These sentiments and opinions our nation, which is the principal nation of the Reformation, is very much overrun with, and they prevail more and more.

Thus much concerning the opposition that Satan has made against the Reformation.

3. I proceed now to show what success the gospel has more lately had, or what success it has had in these later times of the Reformed church. This success may be reduced to these three heads: 1, Reformation in doctrine and worship in countries called Christian; 2 Propagation of the gospel among the Heathen; 3, Revival of religion in the power and practice of it.

(1.) As to the first, viz., reformation in doctrine, the most considerable success of the gospel that has been of late of this kind has been in the empire of Muscovy, which is a country of vast extent. The people of this country, so many of them as call themselves Christians, professed to be of the Greek church; but were barbarously ignorant, and very superstitious till of late years. Their late Emperor Peter the Great, who reigned till within these twenty years,

set himself to reform the people of his dominions, and took great pains to bring them out of their darkness, and to have them instructed in religion. And to that end, he set up schools of learning, and ordered the Bible to be printed in the language of the country, and made a law that every family should keep the holy Scriptures in their houses, and that every person should be able to read the same, and that no person should be allowed to marry till they were able to read the Scriptures. He also reformed the churches of his country of many of their superstitions, whereby the religion professed and practised in Muscovy, is much nearer to that of the Protestants than formerly it used to be. This emperor gave great encouragement to the exercise of the Protestant religion in his dominions. And since that, Muscovy has become a land of light, in comparison of what it was before. Wonderful alterations have been brought about in the face of religion for the better within these fifty years past.

(2.) As to the second kind of success which the gospel has lately had, viz., its propagation among the heathen, I would take notice of three things.

[1.] The propagation there has been of the gospel among the heathen here in America. This American continent on which we live, which is a very great part of the world, and, together with its neighboring seas adjoining, takes up one side of the globe, was wholly unknown to all Christian nations till these later times. It was not known that there was any such part of the world, though it was very full of people; and therefore here the devil had the people that inhabited this part of the world as it were secure to himself, out of the reach of the light of the gospel, and so out of the way of molestation in his dominion over them. And here the many nations of Indians worshipped him as God from age to age, while the gospel was confined to the opposite side of the globe It is a thing, which, if I remember right, I have somewhere lit of, as probably supposed, from some remaining accounts of things, that the occasion of the first peopling of America was this, that the devil, being alarmed and surprised by the wonderful success of the gospel which there was the first three hundred years after Christ, and by the downfall of the Heathen empire in the time of Constantine; and seeing the gospel spread so fast, and fearing that his Heathenish kingdom would be wholly overthrown through the world, led away a people from the other continent into America, that they might be quite out of the reach of the gospel, that here he might quietly possess them, and reign over them as their god. It is what many writers give an account of, that some of the nations of Indians, when the Europeans first came into America, had a tradition among them, that their god first led them into this continent, and went before them in an ark.

Whether this was so or not, yet it is certain that the devil did here quietly enjoy his dominion over the poor nations of Indians for many ages. But in later times God has sent the gospel into these parts of the world, and now the Christian church is set up here in New England, and in other parts of America, where before had been nothing but the grossest Heathenish darkness. Great part of America is now full of Bibles, and full of at least the form of the worship of the true God, and Jesus Christ, where the name of Christ before had not been heard of for many ages, if at all. And though there has been but a small propagation of the gospel among the Heathen here, in comparison of what were to be wished for, yet there has been something worthy to be taken notice of. There was something remarkable in the first times of New England, and something remarkable has appeared of late here, and in other parts of America, among many Indians, of an inclination to be instructed in the Christian religion.

And however small the propagation of the gospel among the Heathen here in America has been hitherto, yet I think we may well look upon the discovery of so great a part of the world as America, and bringing the gospel into it, as one thing by which divine Providence is preparing the way for the future glorious times of the church; when Satan's kingdom shall be overthrown, not only throughout the Roman empire, but throughout the whole habitable globe, on every side, and on all its continents. When those times come, then doubtless the gospel, which is already brought over into America, shall have glorious success, and all the inhabitants of this new discovered world, shall become subjects of the kingdom of Christ, as well as all the other ends of the earth; and in all probability Providence has so ordered it, that the mariner's compass, which is an invention of later times, whereby men are enabled to sail over the widest ocean, when before they durst not venture far from land, should prove a preparation for what God intends to bring to pass in the glorious times of the church, viz., the sending forth the gospel wherever any of the children of men dwell, how far soever off, and however separated by wide oceans from those parts of the world which are already Christianized.

(2.) There has of late years been a very considerable propagation of the gospel among the Heathen in the dominions of Muscovy. I have already observed the reformation which there has lately been among those who are called *Christians* there: but I now speak of the Heathen. Great part of the vast dominions of the emperor of Muscovy are gross Heathens. The greater part of Great Tartary, a Heathen country, has in later times been brought under the Muscovite government; and there have been of late great numbers of those Heathen who have renounced their Heathenism, and have embraced the Christian religion.

[3.] There has been lately a very considerable propagation of the Christian religion among the Heathen in the East Indies; particularly many in a country in the East Indies called *Malabar*, have been brought over to the Christian Protestant religion, chiefly by the labors of certain missionaries sent thither to instruct them by the king of Denmark, who have brought over many Heathens to the Christian faith, and have set up schools among them, and a printing press, to print Bibles and other books for their instruction, in their own language, with great success.

(3.) The last kind of success which there has lately been of the gospel, which I shall take notice of, is the revivals of the power and practice of religion which have lately been. And here I shall take notice of but two instances.

[1.] There has not long since been a remarkable revival of the power and practice of religion in Saxony in Germany, through the endeavors of an eminent divine there, whose name was *August Herman Frank*, professor of divinity at Halle in Saxony, who, being a person of eminent charity, the great work that God wrought by him, began with his setting on foot a charitable design. It began only with his placing an alms-box at his study door, into which some poor mites were thrown, whereby books were bought for the instruction of the poor. And God was pleased so wonderfully to smile on his design, and so to pour out a spirit of charity on people there on that occasion, that with their charity he was enabled, in a little time, to erect public schools for the instruction of poor children, and an orphan house for the supply and instruction of the poor; so that at last it came to that, that near five hundred children were maintained and instructed in learning and piety by the charity of others; and the number continued to increase more and more for many years

and till the last account I have seen. This was accompanied with a wonderful reformation and revival of religion, and a spirit of piety, in the city and university of Halle; and thus it continued. Which also had great influence in many other places in Germany. Their example seemed remarkably to stir up multitudes to their imitation.

[2.] Another thing, which it would be ungrateful in us not to take notice of, is that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God which has been of late in this part of New England, of which we, in this town, have had such a share. But it is needless for me particularly to describe it, it being what you have so lately been eye-witnesses to, and I hope multitudes of you sensible of the benefit of.

Thus I have mentioned the more remarkable instances of the success which the gospel has lately had in the world.

4. I proceed now to the last thing that was proposed to be considered, relating to the success of Christ's redemption during this space, viz., what the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of Christ's purchase. And this I would do, by showing how things are now, compared with the first times of the Reformation. And, 1, I would show wherein the state of things is altered for the worse; and, 2, How it is altered for the better.

(1.) I would show wherein the state of things is altered from what it was in the beginning of the Reformation, for the worse; and it is so especially in these three respects.

[1.] The Reformed church is much diminished. The Reformation, in the former times of it, as was observed before, was supposed to take place through one half of Christendom, excepting the Greek church, or that there were as many Protestants as Papists. But now it is not so; the Protestant church is much diminished. Heretofore there have been multitudes of Protestants in France; many famous Protestant churches were all over that country, who used to meet together in synods, and maintain a very regular discipline; and great part of that kingdom were Protestants. The Protestant church of France was a great part of the glory of the Reformation. But now it is far otherwise: this church is all broken to pieces and scattered. The Protestant religion is almost wholly rooted out of that kingdom by the cruel persecutions which have been there, and there are now but very few Protestant assemblies in all that kingdom. The Protestant interest is also greatly diminished in Germany. There were several sovereign princes there formerly who were Protestants, whose successors are now Papists; as particularly, the Elector Palatine and the Elector of Saxony. The kingdom of Bohemia was formerly a Protestant kingdom, but is now in the hands of the Papists: and so Hungary was formerly a Protestant country; but the Protestants there have been greatly reduced, and, in a great measure, subdued, by the persecutions that have been there. And the Protestant interest has no way remarkably gained ground of late of the church of Rome.

[2.] Another thing wherein the state of things is altered for the worse from what was in the former times of the Reformation, is the prevailing of licentiousness in principles and opinions. There is not now that spirit of orthodoxy which there was then; there is very little appearance of zeal for the mysterious and spiritual doctrines of Christianity; and they never were so ridiculed, and had in contempt, as they are in the present age; and especially in England, the principal kingdom of the Reformation. In this kingdom, those principles,

on which the power of godliness depends, are in a great measure exploded; and Arianism, and Socinianism, and Arminianism, and Deism, are the things which prevail, and carry almost all before them. And particularly history gives no account of any age wherein there was so great an apostasy of those who had been brought up under the light of the gospel, to infidelity; never was there such a casting off of the Christian, and all revealed religion; never any age wherein was so much scoffing at, and ridiculing the gospel of Christ, by those who have been brought up under gospel light, nor any thing like it, as there is at this day.

[3.] Another thing wherein things are altered for the worse, is, that there is much less of the prevalency of the power of godliness, than there was at the beginning of the Reformation. There was a glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God that accompanied the first Reformation, not only to convert multitudes in so short a time from Popery to the true religion, but to turn many to God and true godliness. Religion gloriously flourished in one country and another, as most remarkably appeared in those times of terrible persecution, which have already been spoken of. But now there is an exceeding great decay of vital piety; yea, it seems to be despised, called *enthusiasm*, *whimsy*, and *fanaticism*. Those who are truly religious, are commonly looked upon to be crack-brained, and beside their right mind; and vice and profaneness dreadfully prevail, like a flood which threatens to bear down all before it. But I proceed now to show,

(2.) In what respect things are altered for the better from what they were in the first Reformation.

[1.] The power and influence of the Pope is much diminished. Although, since the former times of the Reformation, he has gained ground in extent of dominion; yet he has lost in degree of influence. The vial which, in the beginning of the Reformation, was poured out on the throne of the beast, to the great diminishing of his power and authority in the world, has continued running ever since. The Pope, soon after the Reformation, became less regarded by the princes of Europe than he had been before; and so he has been since, less and less. Many of the Popish princes themselves seem now to regard him very little more than they think will serve their own designs; of which there have been several remarkable proofs and instances of late.

[2.] There is far less persecution now than there was in the first times of the Reformation. You have heard already how dreadfully persecution raged in the former times of the Reformation; and there is something of it still. Some parts of the Protestant church are at this day under persecution, and so probably will be till the day of the church's suffering and travail is at an end, which will not be till the fall of Antichrist. But it is now in no measure as it was heretofore. There does not seem to be the same spirit of persecution prevailing; it is become more out of fashion even among the Popish princes. The wickedness of the enemies of Christ, and the opposition against his cause, seem to run in another channel. The humor now is, to despise and laugh at all religion; and there seems to be a spirit of indifferency about it. However, so far the state of things is better than it has been, that there is so much less of persecution.

[3.] There is a great increase of learning. In the dark times of Popery before the Reformation, learning was so far decayed, that the world seemed to be overrun with barbarous ignorance. Their very priests were many of them grossly ignorant. Learning began to revive with the Reformation, which was owing very much to the art of printing, which was invented a little before the Reformation; and since that, learning has increased more and more, and at

this day is undoubtedly raised to vastly a greater height than ever it was before; and though no good use is made of it by the greater part of learned men, yet the increase of learning in itself is a thing to be rejoiced in, because it is a good, and, if duly applied, an excellent handmaid to divinity, and is a talent which, if God gives men a heart, affords them a great advantage to do great things for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of the souls of men. That learning and knowledge should greatly increase before the glorious times, seems to be foretold, Dan. xii. 4: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." And however little now learning is applied to the advancement of religion; yet we may hope that the days are approaching, wherein God will make great use of it for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

God in his providence now seems to be acting over again the same part which he did a little time before Christ came. The age wherein Christ came into the world, was an age wherein learning greatly prevailed, and was at a greater height than ever it had been before; and yet wickedness never prevailed more than then. God was pleased to suffer human learning to come to such a height before he sent forth the gospel into the world, that the world might see the insufficiency of all their own wisdom for the obtaining the knowledge of God, without the gospel of Christ, and the teachings of his Spirit: and when, after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. And when the gospel came to prevail first without the help of man's wisdom, then God was pleased to make use of learning as a handmaid. So now learning is at a great height at this day in the world, far beyond what it was in the age when Christ appeared; and now the world, by their learning and wisdom, do not know God; and they seem to wander in darkness, are miserably deluded, stumble and fall in matters of religion, as in midnight darkness. Trusting to their learning, they grope in the day-time as at night. Learned men are exceedingly divided in their opinions concerning the matters of religion, run into all manner of corrupt opinions, pernicious and foolish errors. They scorn to submit their reason to divine revelation, to believe any thing that is above their comprehension; and so, being wise in their own eyes, they become fools, and even vain in their imaginations, and turn the truth of God into a lie, and their foolish hearts are darkened. See Rom. i. 21, &c.

But yet, when God has sufficiently shown men the insufficiency of human wisdom and learning for the purposes of religion, and when the appointed time comes for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God, when he will himself by his own immediate influence enlighten men's minds; then may we hope that God will make use of the great increase of learning as a handmaid to religion, as a means of the glorious advancement of the kingdom of his Son. Then shall human learning be subservient to the understanding of the Scriptures, and to a clear explanation and a glorious defence of the doctrines of Christianity. And there is no doubt to be made of it, that God in his providence has of late given the world the art of printing, and such a great increase of learning, to prepare for what he designs to accomplish for his church in the approaching days of its prosperity. And thus the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just, agreeable to Prov. xxii. 22.

Having now shown how the work of redemption has been carried on from the fall of man to the present time, before I proceed any further, I would make some APPLICATION.

1 From what has been said, we may see great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, and that the Scriptures are the word of God. There are three arguments of this, which I shall take notice of, which may be drawn from what has been said.

(1.) It may be argued from that violent and inveterate opposition there has always appeared of the wickedness of the world against this religion. The religion that the church of God has professed from the first founding of the church after the fall to this time, has always been the same Though the dispensations have been altered, yet the religion which the church has professed has always, as to its essentials, been the same. The church of God, from the beginning, has been one society. The Christian church which has been since Christ's ascension, is manifestly the same society continued, with the church that was before Christ came. The Christian church is grafted on their root; they are built on the same foundation. The revelation on which both have depended, is essentially the same: for as the Christian church is built on the holy Scriptures, so was the Jewish church, though now the Scriptures be enlarged by the addition of the New Testament; but still it is essentially the same revelation with that which was given in the Old Testament, only the subjects of divine revelation are now more clearly revealed in the New Testament than they were in the Old. But the sum and substance of both the Old Testament and New, is Christ and his redemption. The religion of the church of Israel, was essentially the same religion with that of the Christian church, as evidently appears from what has been said. The ground-work of the religion of the church of God, both before and since Christ has appeared, is the same great scheme of redemption by the Son of God; and so the church that was before the Israelitish church, was still the same society, and it was essentially the same religion that was professed and practised in it. Thus it was from Noah to Abraham, and thus it was before the flood. And this society of men that is called *the church*, has always been built on the foundation of those revelations which we have in the Scriptures, which have always been essentially the same, though gradually increasing. The church before the flood, was built on the foundation of those revelations of Christ which were given to Adam, and Abel, and Enoch, of which we have an account in the former chapters of Genesis, and others of the like import. The church after the flood, was built on the foundation of the revelations made to Noah and Abraham, to Melchisedeck, Isaac, and Jacob, to Joseph, Job, and other holy men, of whom we have an account in the Scriptures, or other revelations that were to the same purpose. And after this the church depended on the Scriptures themselves as they gradually increased; so that the church of God has always been built on the foundation of divine revelation, and always on those revelations that were essentially the same, and which were summarily comprehended in the holy Scriptures, and ever since about Moses's time have been built on the Scriptures themselves.

So that the opposition which has been made to the church of God in all ages, has always been against the same religion, and the same revelation. Now therefore the violent and perpetual opposition that has ever been made by the corruption and wickedness of mankind against this church, is a strong argument of the truth of this religion, and this revelation, upon which this church has always been built. Contraries are well argued one from another. We may well and safely argue, that a thing is good, according to the degree of opposition in which it stands to evil, or the degree in which evil opposes it, and is an enemy to it. We may well argue, that a thing is light, by the great

enmity which darkness has to it. Now it is evident, by the things which ye have heard concerning the church of Christ, and that holy religion of Jesus Christ which it has professed, that the wickedness of the world has had a perpetual hatred to it, and has made most violent opposition against it.

That the church of God has always met with great opposition in the world, none can deny. This is plain by profane history as far as that reaches; and before that, divine history gives us the same account. The church of God, and its religion and worship, began to be opposed in Cain's and Abel's time, and was so when the earth was filled with violence in Noah's time. And after this how was the church opposed in Egypt! And how was the church of Israel always hated by the nations round about, agreeable to that in Jer. xii. 9, "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her." And after the Babylonish captivity, how was this church persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes, and others! And how was Christ persecuted when he was on earth! And how were the apostles and other Christians persecuted by the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans! How violent were that people against the church! And how dreadful was the opposition of the Heathen world against the Christian church after this before Constantine! How great was their spite against the true religion! And since that, how yet more violent, and spiteful, and cruel, has been the opposition of Antichrist against the church!

There is no other such instance of opposition. History gives no account of any other body of men that have been so hated, and so maliciously and insatiably pursued and persecuted, nor any thing like it. No other religion ever was so maligned age after age. The nations of other professions have enjoyed their religions in peace and quietness, however they have differed from their neighbors. One nation has worshipped one sort of gods, and others another, without molesting or disturbing one another about it. All the spite and opposition has been against this religion, which the church of Christ has professed. All other religions have seemed to show an implacable enmity to this; and men have seemed to have, from one age to another, such a spite against it, that they have seemed as though they could never satisfy their cruelty. They put their inventions upon the rack to find out torments that should be cruel enough; and yet, after all, never seemed to be satisfied. Their thirst has never been satisfied with blood.

So that this is out of doubt, that this religion, and these Scriptures, have always been malignantly opposed in the world. The only question that remains is, What it is that has made this opposition? Whether or not it has been good or bad? Whether it be the wickedness and corruption of the world, or not, that has done this? But of this there can be no greater doubt than of the other, if we consider how causeless this cruelty has always been, who the opposers have been, and the manner in which they have opposed. The opposition has chiefly been from Heathenism and Popery; which things certainly are evil. They are both of them very evil, and the fruits of the blindness, corruption, and wickedness of men, as the very Deists themselves confess. The light of nature shows, that the religion of Heathens, consisting in the worship of idols, and sacrificing their children to them, and in obscene and abominable rites and ceremonies, is wickedness. And the superstitions, and idolatries, and usurpations of the church of Rome, are no less contrary to the light of nature. By this it appears, that this opposition which has been made against the church of God, has been made by wicked men. And with regard to the opposition of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' times, it was in a most corrupt time of

that nation, when the people were generally become exceeding wicked, as some of the Jewish writers themselves, as Josephus and others, who lived about that time, do expressly say. And that it has been mere wickedness that has made this opposition, is manifest, from the manner of opposition, the extreme violence, injustice, and cruelty, with which the church of God has been treated. It seems to show the hand of malignant infernal spirits in it.

Now what reason can be assigned, why the corruption and wickedness of the world should so implacably set itself against this religion of Jesus Christ, and against the Scriptures, but only that they are contrary to wickedness, and consequently are good and holy? Why should the enemies of Christ, for so many thousand years together, manifest such a mortal hatred of this religion, but only that it is the cause of God? If the Scriptures be not the word of God, and the religion of the church of Christ be not the true religion, then it must follow, that it is a most wicked religion; nothing but a pack of lies and abominable delusions, invented by the enemies of God themselves. And if this were so, it is not likely that the enemies of God, and the wickedness of the world, would have maintained such a perpetual and implacable enmity against it.

(2.) It is a great argument that the Christian church and its religion is from God, that it has been upheld hitherto through all the opposition and dangers it has passed through. That the church of God and the true religion, which has been so continually and violently opposed, with so many endeavors to overthrow it, and which has so often been brought to the brink of ruin, and almost swallowed up, through the greatest part of six thousand years, has yet been upheld, does most remarkably show the hand of God in favor of the church. If we consider it, it will appear one of the greatest wonders and miracles that ever came to pass. There is nothing else like it upon the face of the earth. There is no other society of men that has stood as the church has. As to the old world which was before the flood, that was overthrown by a deluge of waters; but yet the church of God was preserved. Satan's visible kingdom on earth was then once entirely overthrown; but the visible kingdom of Christ never has been overthrown. All those ancient human kingdoms and monarchies of which we read, and which have been in former ages, they are long since come to an end. Those kingdoms of which we read in the Old Testament, of the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, &c., they are all long ago come to an end. Those four great monarchies of the world have been overthrown, one after another. The great empire of proud Babylon was overthrown by the Persians; and then the Persian empire was overthrown by the Greeks; after this the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans; and, finally, the Roman empire fell a sacrifice to various barbarous nations. Here is a remarkable fulfilmen. of the words of the text with respect to other things, even the greatest and most glorious of them: they have all grown old and have vanished away: "The moth has eaten them up like a garment, and the worm has eaten them like wool;" but yet God's church remains.

Never were there so many potent endeavors to destroy any thing else, as there have been to destroy the church. Other kingdoms and societies of men, which have appeared to be ten times as strong as the church of God, have been destroyed with a hundreth part of the opposition which the church of God has met with; which shows, that it is God who has been the protector of the church. For it is most plain, that it has not upheld itself by its own strength. For the most part, it has been a very weak society. They have been a little flock; so they were of old. The children of Israel were but a small handful

of people, in comparison of the many who sought their overthrow. And so in Christ's time, and in the beginning of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, they were but a remnant: whereas the whole multitude of the Jewish nation were against them. And so in the beginning of the Gentile church, they were but a small number in comparison with the Heathen, who sought their overthrow. And so in the dark times of Antichrist, before the Reformation, they were but a handful; and yet their enemies could not overthrow them. And it has commonly been so, that the enemies of the church have not only had the greatest number on their side, but they have had the strength on their side in other respects. They have commonly had all the civil authority on their side. So it was in Egypt: the civil authority was on the side of the Egyptians, and the church were only their slaves, and were in their hands; and yet they could not overthrow them. And so it was in the time of the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes: the authority was all on the side of the persecutors, and the church was under their dominion; and yet all their cruelty could not extirpate it. And so it was afterwards in the time of the Heathen Roman government. And so it was in the time of Julian the apostate, who did his utmost to overthrow the Christian church, and to restore Heathenism. And so it has been for the most part since the rise of Antichrist: for a great many ages, the civil authority was all on the side of Antichrist, and the church seemed to be in their hands.

And not only has the strength of the enemies of the church been greater than the strength of the church, but ordinarily the church has not used what strength they have had in their own defence, but have committed themselves wholly to God. So it was in the time of the Jewish persecutions before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and so it was in the time of the Heathen persecutions before Constantine; the Christians did not only not rise up in arms to defend themselves, but they did not pretend to make any forcible resistance to their Heathen persecutors. So it has for the most part been under the Popish persecutions; and yet they have never been able to overthrow the church of God; but it stands to this very day.

And this is still the more exceeding wonderful, if we consider how often the church has been brought to the brink of ruin, and the case seemed to be desperate, and all hope gone, and they seemed to be swallowed up. In the time of the old world, when wickedness so prevailed, as that but one family was left, yet God wonderfully appeared, and overthrew the wicked world with a flood, and preserved his church. And so at the Red Sea, when Pharaoh and his host thought they were quite sure of their prey; yet God appeared, and destroyed them, and delivered his church. And so was it from time to time in the church of Israel, as has been shown. So under the tenth and last Heathen persecution, their persecutors boasted that now they had done the business for the Christians, and had overthrown the Christian church; yet in the midst of their triumph, the Christian church rises out of the dust and prevails, and the Heathen empire totally falls before it. So when the Christian church seemed ready to be swallowed up by the Arian heresy; so when Antichrist rose and prevailed, and all the world wondered after the beast, and the church for many hundred years was reduced to such a small number, and seemed to be hidden, and the power of the world was engaged to destroy those little remainders of the church; yet they could never fully accomplish their design, and at last God wonderfully revived his church in the time of the Reformation, and made it to stand as it were on its feet in the sight of its enemies, and raised it out of their reach. And so since, when the Popish powers have plotted the overthrow of

the Reformed church, and have seemed just about to bring their matters to a conclusion, and to finish their design, then God has wonderfully appeared for the deliverance of his church, as it was in the time of the Revolution by King William. And so it has been from time to time; presently after the darkest times of the church, God has made his church most gloriously to flourish.

If such a preservation of the church of God, from the beginning of the world hitherto, attended with such circumstances, is not sufficient to show a divine hand in favor of it, what can be devised that would be sufficient? But if this be from the divine hand, then God owns the church, and owns her religion, and owns that revelation and those Scriptures on which she is built; and so it will follow, that their religion is the true religion, or God's religion, and that the Scriptures, which they make their rule, are his word.

(3.) We may draw this further argument for the divine authority of the Scriptures from what has been said, viz., that God has so fulfilled those things which are foretold in the Scriptures.—I have already observed, as I went along, how the prophecies of Scripture were fulfilled: I shall now therefore single out but two instances of the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy.

[1.] One is in preserving his church from being ruined. I have just now shown what an evidence this is of the divine authority of the Scriptures in itself considered: I now speak of it as a fulfilment of Scripture prophecy. This is abundantly foretold and promised in the Scriptures, as particularly in the text: there it is foretold, that other things shall fail, other kingdoms and monarchies which set themselves in opposition, should come to nothing: "The moth should eat them up like a garment, and the worm should eat them like wool." And so it has in fact come to pass. But it is here foretold, that God's covenant mercy to his church should continue forever; and so it hath hitherto proved, though now it be so many ages since, and though the church has passed through so many dangers. The same is promised, Isa. liv. 17, "No weapon that is formed against thee, shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." And again, Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16, "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, but yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." The same is promised again, in Isa. lix. 21, and Isa. xliii. 1, 2, and Zech. xii. 2, 3. So Christ promises the same, when he says, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now if this be not from God, and the Scriptures be not the word of God, and the church of Christ, built on the foundation of this word be not of God, how could the persons who foretold this, know it? for if the church were not of God, it was a very unlikely thing ever to come to pass. For they foretold the great opposition, and the great dangers, and also foretold that other kingdoms should come to nought, and that the church should often be almost swallowed up, as it were easy to show, and yet foretold that the church should remain. Now how could they foresee so unlikely a thing but by divine inspiration?

[2.] The other remarkable instance which I shall mention of the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy, is in fulfilling what is foretold concerning Antichrist, a certain great opposer of Christ and his kingdom. And the way that this Antichrist should arise, is foretold, viz., not among the Heathen, or those nations that never professed Christianity; but that he should arise by the apostasy and falling away of the Christian church into a corrupt state: 2 Thess. ii. 3, "For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man

of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."—And it is prophesied, that this Antichrist, or man of sin, should be one that should set himself up in the temple or visible church of God, pretending to be vested with the power of God himself, as head of the church, as in the same chapter, verse 4. And all this is exactly come to pass in the church of Rome. Again, it is intimated, that the rise of Antichrist should be gradual, as there, verse 7, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way." This also came to pass.—Again, it is prophesied of such a great and mighty enemy of the Christian church, that he should be a great prince or monarch of the Roman empire: so he is represented as a horn of the fourth beast in Daniel, or fourth kingdom or monarchy upon earth, as the angel himself explains it, as you may see of the little horn in the 7th chapter of Daniel. This also came to pass.—Yea, it is prophesied that the seat of this great prince, or pretended vicar of God, and head of his church, should be in the city of Rome itself. In the 17th chapter of Revelation, it is said expressly, that the spiritual whore, or false church, should have her seat on seven mountains or hills: Rev. xvii. 9, "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth:" and in the last verse of the chapter, it is said expressly, "The woman which thou sawest, is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" which it is certain was at that time the city of Rome. This prophecy has also come to pass in the church of Rome.

Further, it was prophesied, that this Antichrist should reign over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, Rev. xvii. 15; and that all the world should wonder after the beast, Rev. xiii. 3. This also came to pass in the church of Rome. It was foretold that this Antichrist should be eminent and remarkable for the sin of pride, pretending to great things, and assuming very much to himself: so in the forementioned place in Thessalonians, "That he should exalt himself above all that is called God," or that is worshipped." So Rev. xiii. 5, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies." Dan. vii. 20, the little horn is said to have a mouth speaking very great things, and his look to be more stout than his fellows. This also came to pass in the Pope, and the church of Rome.—It was also prophesied, that Antichrist should be an exceeding cruel persecutor, Dan. vii. 21. The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them: Revelation xiii. 7, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." Revelation xvii. 6, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This also came to pass in the church of Rome.—It was foretold, that Antichrist should excel in craft and policy: Dan. vii. 8, "In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man." And verse 20, "Even of that horn that had eyes." This also came to pass in the church of Rome.—It was foretold that the kings of Christendom should be subject to Antichrist: Rev. xvii. 12, 13, "And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." This also came to pass with respect to the Romish church.—It was foretold, that he should perform pretended miracles and lying wonders: 2 Thess. ii. 9, "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." Rev. xiii. 13, 14, "And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This also came to pass in the church of Rome. Fire's coming down

from heaven, seems to have reference to their excommunications, which were dreaded like fire from heaven.—It was foretold, that he should forbid to marry, and to abstain from meats: 1 Tim. iv. 3, "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving." This also is exactly fulfilled in the church of Rome.—It was foretold, that he should be very rich, and arrive at a great degree of earthly splendor and glory: Rev. xvii. 4, "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand." And so chap. xviii. 7, 12, 13, 16. This also is come to pass with respect to the church of Rome.—It was foretold that he should forbid any to buy or sell, but those that had his mark: Rev. xiii. 17, "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." This also is fulfilled in the church of Rome.—It was foretold, that he should sell the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13, where, in enumerating the articles of his merchandise, *the souls of men* are mentioned as one. This also is exactly fulfilled in the same church.—It was foretold, that Antichrist would not suffer the bodies of God's people to be put into graves: Rev. xi. 8, 9, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city—and they—shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." This also has literally come to pass with respect to the church of Rome.—I might mention many other things which were foretold of Antichrist, or that great enemy of the church so often spoken of in Scripture, and show that they were fulfilled most exactly in the Pope and the church of Rome.

How strong an argument is this, that the Scriptures are the word of God!

2. But now I come to a second *inference;* which is this: from what has been said, we may learn what the spirit of true Christians is, viz., a spirit of suffering. Seeing God has so ordered it in his providence, that his church should for so long a time, for the greater part of so many ages, be in a suffering state, yea, and often in a state of such extreme suffering, we may conclude that the spirit of the true church is a suffering spirit, otherwise God never would have ordered so much suffering for the church; for doubtless God accommodates the state and circumstances of the church to the spirit that he has given them. We see by what has been said, how many and great sufferings the Christian church for the most part has been under for these 1700 years: no wonder therefore that Christ so much inculcated upon his disciples, that it was necessary, that if any would be his disciples, "they must deny themselves, and take up their cross and follow him."

And we may argue, that the spirit of the true church of Christ is a suffering spirit, by the spirit the church has shown and exercised under her sufferings. She has actually, under those terrible persecutions through which she has passed, rather chosen to undergo those dreadful torments, and to sell all for the pearl of great price, to suffer all that her bitterest enemies could inflict, than to renounce Christ and his religion. History furnishes us with a great number of remarkable instances, sets in view a great cloud of witnesses. This abundantly confirms the necessity of being of a spirit to sell all for Christ, to renounce our own ease, our own worldly profit, and honor, and our all, for *him*, and for the gospel

Let us inquire, whether we are of such a spirit. How does it prove upon trial? Does it prove in fact that we are willing to deny ourselves, and renounce our own worldly interest, and to pass through the trials to which we are called in providence? Alas, how small are our trials, compared with those of many of our fellow Christians in former ages! And I would on this occasion apply

that in Jer. xii. 5, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" If you have not been able to endure the light trials to which you have been called in this age, and in this land, how would you be able to endure the far greater trials to which the church has been called in former ages? Every true Christian has the spirit of a martyr and would suffer as a martyr, if he were called to it in providence.

3. Hence we learn what great reason we have, assuredly to expect the fulfilment of what yet remains to be fulfilled of things foretold in Scripture The Scriptures foretell many great things yet to be fulfilled before the end of the world. But there seem to be great difficulties in the way. We seem at present to be very far from such a state as is foretold in the Scriptures; but we have abundant reason to expect, that these things, however seemingly difficult, will yet be accomplished in their season. We see the faithfulness of God to his promises hitherto. How true has God been to his church, and remembered his mercy from generation to generation! We may say concerning what God has done hitherto for his church, as Joshua said to the children of Israel, Josh. xxiii 14, "That not one thing hath failed of all that the Lord our God hath spoken concerning his church;" but all things are hitherto come to pass agreeably to the divine prediction. This should strengthen our faith in those promises, and encourage us, and stir us up to earnest prayer to God for the accomplishment of the great and glorious things which yet remain to be fulfilled.

It has already been shown how the success of Christ's redemption was carried on through various periods down to the present time.

4thly. I come now to show how the success of Christ's redemption will be carried on from the present time, till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is destroyed. And with respect to this space of time, we have nothing to guide us but the prophecies of Scripture. Through most of the time from the fall of man to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, we had Scripture history to guide us; and from thence to the present time we had prophecy, together with the accomplishment of it in providence, as related in human histories. But henceforward we have only prophecy to guide us. And here I would pass by those things that are only conjectural, or that are surmised by some from those prophecies which are doubtful in their interpretation, and shall insist only on those things which are more clear and evident.

We know not what particular events are to come to pass before that glorious work of God's Spirit begins, by which Satan's kingdom is to be overthrown. By the consent of most divines, there are but few things, if any at all, that are foretold to be accomplished before the beginning of that glorious work of God. Some think the slaying of the witnesses, Rev. xi. 7, 8, is not yet accomplished. So divines differ with respect to the pouring out of the seven vials, of which we have an account, Rev. xvi, how many are already poured out, or how many remain to be poured out; though a late expositor, whom I have before mentioned to you, seems to make it very plain and evident, that all are already poured out but two, viz. the sixth on the river Euphrates, and the seventh into the air. But I will not now stand to inquire what is intended by the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared; but only would say, that it seems to be something immediately preparing the way for the destruction of the spiritual Babylon, as the drying up of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of old Babylon, was what prepared the way of the kings of the Medes and Persians, the kings of the east, to come in under the walls, and destroy that city.

But whatever this be, it does not appear that it is any thing which shall be

accomplished before that work of God's Spirit is begun, by which, as it goes on, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be utterly overthrown. And therefore I would proceed directly to consider what the Scripture reveals concerning the work of God itself, by which he will bring about this great event, as being the next thing which is to be accomplished that we are certain of from the prophecies of Scripture.

And, first, I would observe two things in general concerning it.

1. We have all reason to conclude from the Scriptures, that just before this work of God begins, it will be a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion in the world. It has been so before those glorious revivals of religion that have been hitherto. It was so when Christ came; it was an exceeding degenerate time among the Jews: and so it was a very dark time before the Reformation. And not only so, but it seems to be foretold in Scripture, that it shall be a time of but little religion, when Christ shall come to set up his kingdom in the world. Thus when Christ spake of his coming, to encourage his elect, who cry to him day and night, in Luke xviii. 8, he adds this, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Which seems to denote a great prevalency of infidelity just before Christ's coming to avenge his suffering church. Though Christ's coming at the last judgment is not here to be excluded, yet there seems to be a special respect to his coming to deliver his church from their long-continued suffering, persecuted state, which is accomplished only at his coming at the destruction of Antichrist. That time that the elect cry to God, as in Rev. vi. 10, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And the time spoken of in Rev. xviii. 20, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her," will then be accomplished.

It is now a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion, and such a time as this prophesied of in this place; wherein there is but a little faith, and a great prevailing of infidelity on the earth. There is now a remarkable fulfilment of that in 2 Pet. iii. 3: "Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking in their own lusts." And so Jude 17, 18, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." Whether the times shall be any darker still, or how much darker, before the beginning of this glorious work of God, we cannot tell.

2. There is no reason from the word of God to think any other, than that this great work of God will be wrought, though very swiftly, yet gradually. As the children of Israel were gradually brought out of the Babylonish captivity, first one company, and then another, and gradually rebuilt their city and temple; and as the Heathen Roman empire was destroyed by a gradual, though a very swift prevalency of the gospel; so, though there are many things which seem to hold forth as though the work of God would be exceeding swift, and many great and wonderful events should very suddenly be brought to pass, and some great parts of Satan's visible kingdom should have a very sudden fall, yet all will not be accomplished at once, as by some great miracle, as the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world will be all at once; but this is a work which will be accomplished by means, by the preaching of the gospel, and the use of the ordinary means of grace, and so shall be gradually brought to pass. Some shall be converted, and be the means of others' conversion. God's Spirit shall be poured out first to raise up instruments, and then those in-

struments shall be used and succeeded. And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted after another, one false religion and false way of worship exploded after another. By the representation in Dan. ii. 3, 4, the stone cut out of the mountain without hands gradually grows. So Christ teaches us, that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, Matt. xiii. 31, 32, and like leaven hid in three measures of meal, verse 33. The same representation we have in Mark iv. 26, 27, 28, and in the vision of the waters of the sanctuary, Ezek. xlvii. The Scriptures hold forth as though there should be several successive great and glorious events by which this glorious work shall be accomplished. The angel, speaking to the prophet Daniel of those glorious times, mentions two glorious periods, at the end of which glorious things should be accomplished: Dan. xii. 11, "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." But then he adds in the next verse, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days;" intimating, that something very glorious shall be accomplished at the end of the former period, but something much more glorious at the end of the latter.

But I now proceed to show how this glorious work shall be accomplished.

1. The Spirit of God shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful revival and propagation of religion. This great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by God's Holy Spirit: Zech. iv. 6, 7, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." So the prophet Ezekiel, speaking of this great work of God, says, chap. xxxix. 29, "Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." We know not where this pouring out of the Spirit shall begin, or whether in many places at once, or whether, what hath already been, be not some forerunner and beginning of it.

This pouring out of the Spirit of God, when it is begun, shall soon bring great multitudes to forsake that vice and wickedness which now so generally prevails, and shall cause that vital religion which is now so despised and laughed at in the world, to revive. The work of conversion shall break forth and go on in such a manner as never has been hitherto; agreeable to that in Isa. xliv 3, 4, 5.—God, by pouring out his Holy Spirit, will furnish men to be glorious instruments of carrying on this work; will fill them with knowledge and wisdom, and fervent zeal for the promoting the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of souls, and propagating the gospel in the world. So that the gospel shall begin to be preached with abundantly greater clearness and power than had heretofore been: for this great work of God shall be brought to pass by the preaching of the gospel, as is represented in Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8. That before Babylon falls, the gospel shall be powerfully preached and propagated in the world.

This was typified of old by the sounding of the silver trumpets in Israel in the beginning of their jubilee: Lev. xxv. 9, "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land." The glorious times which are approaching, are as it were the church's jubilee, which shall be introduced by the sounding of the silver trumpet of the gospel, as is foretold in Isa. xxvii. 13, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the

land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." And there shall be a glorious pouring out of the Spirit with this clear and powerful preaching of the gospel, to make it successful for reviving those holy doctrines of religion which are now chiefly ridiculed in the world, and turning many from heresy, and from Popery, and from other false religions; and also for turning many from their vice and profaneness, and for bringing vast multitudes savingly home to Christ.

The work of conversion shall go on in a wonderful manner, and spread more and more. Many shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, and shall come as it were in flocks, one flock and multitude after another continually flowing in, as in Isa. lx. 4, 5, "Lift up thine eye round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together." And so verse 8, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" And it being represented in the forementioned place in the Revelation, that the gospel shall be preached to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and people, before the fall of Antichrist; so we may suppose, that it will soon be gloriously successful to bring in multitudes from every nation; and it shall spread more and more with wonderful swiftness, and vast numbers shall suddenly be brought in as it were at once, as you may see, Isa. lxvi. 7, 8, 9.

2. This pouring out of the Spirit of God will not effect the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom, till there has first been a violent and mighty opposition made. In this the Scripture is plain, that when Christ is thus gloriously coming forth, and the destruction of Antichrist is ready at hand, and Satan's kingdom begins to totter, and to appear to be imminently threatened, the powers of the kingdom of darkness will rise up, and mightily exert themselves to prevent their kingdom being overthrown. Thus after the pouring out of the sixth vial, which was to dry up the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for the destruction of spiritual Babylon, it is represented in Rev. xvi., as though the powers of hell will be mightily alarmed, and should stir up themselves to oppose the kingdom of Christ, before the seventh and last vial shall be poured out, which shall give them a final and complete overthrow. We have an account of the pouring out of the sixth in verse 12. And then upon this, the beloved disciple informs us in the following verses, that, "three unclean spirits like frogs shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." This seems to be the last and greatest effort of Satan to save his kingdom from being overthrown; though perhaps he may make as great towards the end of the world to regain it.

When the Spirit begins to be so gloriously poured forth, and the devil sees such multitudes flocking to Christ in one nation and another, and the foundations of his kingdom daily undermining, and the pillars of it breaking, and the whole ready to come to swift and sudden destruction, it will greatly alarm all hell. Satan has ever had a dread of having his kingdom overthrown, and he has been opposing of it ever since Christ's ascension, and has been doing great works to fortify his kingdom, and to prevent it, ever since the day of Constantin the Great. To this end he has set up those two mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and brought in all the heresies and superstitions and corrupt opinions, which there are in the world. But when he sees all begins to fail, it will rouse him up exceedingly If Satan dreaded being cast out of the Roman empire, how much more does he dread being cast out of the whole world!

It seems as though in this last great opposition which shall be made against the church to defend the kingdom of Satan, all the forces of Antichrist, and Mahometanism, and Heathenism, will be united; all the forces of Satan's visible kingdom through the whole world of mankind. And therefore it is said, that "spirits of devils shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." And these spirits are said to come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; i. e., there shall be the spirit of Popery, and the spirit of Mahometanism, and the spirit of Heathenism all united. By the beast is meant Antichrist; by the dragon, in this book, is commonly meant the devil, as he reigns over his Heathen kingdom; by the false prophet, in this book, is sometimes meant the Pope and his clergy: but here an eye seems to be had to Mahomet, whom his followers call the great prophet of God. This will be as it were the dying struggles of the old serpent; a battle wherein he will fight as one that is almost desperate.

We know not particularly in what manner this opposition shall be made. It is represented as a battle; it is called the *battle of the great day of God Almighty.* There will be some way or other a mighty struggle between Satan's kingdom and the church, and probably in all ways of opposition that can be; and doubtless great opposition by external force; wherein the princes of the world who are on the devil's side shall join hand in hand: for it is said, "The kings of the earth are gathered together to battle," Rev. xix. 19. And probably with all there will be great opposition by subtle disputers and carnal reasoning, and great persecution in many places, and great opposition by virulent reproaches, and also great opposition by craft and subtlety. The devil now doubtless will ply his skill as well as strength to the utmost. The devils, and those who belong to their kingdom, will everywhere be stirred up, and engaged to make a united and violent opposition against this holy religion, which they see prevailing so mightily in the world.—But,

Christ and his church shall in this battle obtain a complete and entire victory over their enemies. They shall be totally routed and overthrown in this their last effort. When the powers of hell and earth are thus gathered together against Christ, and his armies shall come forth against them by his word and Spirit to fight with them, in how august and pompous, and glorious a manner is this coming forth of Christ and his church to this battle described, Rev. xix. 11, &c. And to represent to us how great the victory should be which they should obtain, and how mighty the overthrow of their enemies, it is said, verses 17, and 18, that "all the fowls of heaven are called together, to eat the great supper given them, of the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men." &c. and then, in the following verses, we have an account of the victory and overthrow.

In this victory, the seventh vial shall be poured out. It is said, Rev. xvi. 16, of the great army that should be gathered together against Christ: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, *Armageddon;*" and then it is said, "and the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Now the business is done for Satan and his adherents. When this victory is obtained, all is in effect done. Satan's last and greatest opposition is conquered; all his measures are defeated; the pillars of his kingdom broken asunder, and will fall of course. The devil is utterly baffled and confounded, and knows not what else to do. He now sees his Antichristian, and Mahometan, and Heathenish kingdoms through the world, all tumbling

about his ears. He and his most powerful instruments are taken captive. Now that is in effect done which the church of God had been so long waiting and hoping for, and so earnestly crying to God for, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" Now the time is come.

The angel who set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, lift up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and all things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that when the seventh angel should come to sound, the time should be no longer. And now the time is come; now the seventh trumpet sounds, and the seventh vial is poured out, both together; intimating, that now all is finished as to the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth. This victory shall be by far the greatest that ever was obtained over Satan and his adherents. By this blow, with which the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall strike the image of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, and clay, it shall all be broken to pieces. This will be a finishing blow to the image, so that it shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

In this victory will be a most glorious display of divine power. Christ shall therein appear in the character of King of kings, and Lord of lords, as in Rev. xix. 16. Now Christ shall dash his enemies, even the strongest and proudest of them, in pieces; as a potter's vessel shall they be broken to shivers. Then shall strength be shown out of weakness, and Christ shall cause his church as it were to thresh the mountains, as in Isa. xli. 15: "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." And then shall be fulfilled that in Isa. xlii. 13, 14, 15.

4. Consequent on this victory, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be destroyed. When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the church of Christ will have easy work of it; as when Joshua and the children of Israel had obtained that great victory over the five kings of the Amorites. When the sun stood still, and God sent great hail-stones on their enemies, they after that went from one city to another, and burnt them with fire: they had easy work of subduing the cities and country to which they belonged. So it was, also, after that other great battle that Joshua had with that great multitude at the waters of Meram. So after this glorious victory of Christ and his church over their enemies, over the chief powers of Satan's kingdom, they shall destroy that kingdom in all those cities and countries to which they belonged. After this the word of God shall have a speedy and swift progress through the earth; as it is said, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, "the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found," Rev. xvi. 19, 20. When once the stone cut out of the mountain without hands had broken the image in pieces, it was easy to abolish all remains of it. The very wind will carry it away as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor. Because Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall now be destroyed, therefore it is said, that the seventh vial, by which this shall be done, shall be poured out into the air; which is represented in Scripture as the special seat of his kingdom; for he is called *the prince of the power of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. Now is come the time for punishing leviathan, that piercing serpent, of which we read in Isa. xxvii. 1: "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan, the piercing serpent, even leviathan, that crooked serpent, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

Concerning this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, I would 1, Show wherein this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom will chiefly consist; 2, The extent and universality of this overthrow.

1. I would show wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist. I shall mention the particular things in which it will consist, without pretending to determine in what order they shall come to pass, or which shall be accomplished first, or whether they shall be accomplished together.

(1.) Heresies, and infidelity, and superstition, among those who have been brought up under the light of the gospel, will then be abolished. Then there will be an end of Socinianism, and Arianism, and Quakerism, and Arminianism; and Deism, which is now so bold and *confident in infidelity*, shall then be crushed, and driven away, and vanish to nothing; and all shall agree in the same great and important doctrines of the gospel; agreeable to that in Zech. xiv. 9: "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." Then shall be abolished all superstitious ways of worship, and all shall agree in worshipping God in his own ways: Jer. xxxii. 39, "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

(2.) The kingdom of Antichrist shall be utterly overthrown. His kingdom and dominion has been much brought down already by the vial poured out on his throne in the Reformation; but then it shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall be proclaimed, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." When the seventh angel sounds, the time, times and half, shall be out, "and the time shall be no longer." Then shall be accomplished concerning Antichrist the things which are written in the 18th chapter of Revelation, of the spiritual Babylon, that great city Rome, or the idolatrous Roman government, that has for so many ages been the great enemy of the Christian church, first under Heathenism, then under Popery: that proud city, which lifted herself up to heaven, and above God himself, in her pride and haughtiness; that cruel, bloody city, shall come down to the ground. Then shall that be fulfilled, Isa. xxvi. 5, "For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty city he layeth it low, he layeth it low, even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust." She shall be thrown down with violence, like a great millstone cast into the sea, and shall be found no more at all, and shall become a habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Now shall she be stripped of all her glory, and riches, and ornaments, and shall be cast out as an abominable branch, and shall be trodden down as the mire of the streets. All her policy and craft, in which she so abounded, shall not save her. And God shall make his people, who have been so persecuted by her, to come and put their foot on the neck of Antichrist, and he shall be their footstool. All the strength and wisdom of this great whore shall fail her, and there shall be none to help her. The kings of the earth, who before gave their power and strength to the beast, shall now hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, Rev xvii. 16.

(3.) That other great kingdom which Satan has set up in opposition to the Christian church, viz., his Mahometan kingdom, shall be utterly overthrown. The locusts and horsemen, in the 9th of Revelation, have their appointed and limited time set them there, and the false prophet shall be taken and destroyed. And then, though Mahometanism has been so vastly propagated in the world and is upheld by such a great empire, this smoke which has ascended out of

the bottomless pit, shall be utterly scattered before the light of that glorious day, and the Mahometan empire shall fall at the sound of the great trumpet which shall then be blown.

(4.) Jewish infidelity shall then be overthrown. However obstinate they have been now for above 1700 years in their rejection of Christ, and instances of the conversion of any of that nation have been so very rare ever since the destruction of Jerusalem, but they have against the plain teachings of their own prophets continued to approve of the cruelty of their forefathers in crucifying Christ: yet when this day comes, the thick vail that blinds their eyes shall be removed, 2 Cor. iii. 16; and divine grace shall melt and renew their hard hearts, "and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born," Zech. xii. 10, &c. And then shall the house of Israel be saved: the Jews, in all their dispersions, shall cast away their old infidelity, and shall wonderfully have their hearts changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy; and shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly, and joyfully owning him as their glorious King, and only Saviour, and shall with all their hearts, as with one heart and voice, declare his praises unto other nations.

Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews is in the 11th chapter of Romans. And there are also many passages of the Old Testament which cannot be interpreted in any other sense, which I cannot now stand to mention. Besides the prophecies of the calling of the Jews, we have a remarkable seal of the fulfilment of this great event in providence, by a thing which is a kind of continual miracle, viz., their being preserved a distinct nation in such a dispersed condition for above 1600 years. The world affords nothing else like it. There is undoubtedly a remarkable hand of providence in it. When they shall be called, then shall that ancient people, that were alone God's people for so long a time, be God's people again, never to be rejected more: they shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles; and so also shall the remains of the ten tribes, wherever they be, and though they have been rejected much longer than the Jews, be brought in with their brethren the Jews. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and Solomon; as Hos. i. 11; and so in the last chapter of Hosea, and other parts of his prophecy.

Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of the nation of Israel will come to pass; yet thus much we may determine by Scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished; because it is said, that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 12—15.

(5.) Then shall also Satan's Heathenish kingdom be overthrown. Gross Heathenism now possesses a great part of the earth, and there are supposed to be more Heathens now in the world, than of all other professions taken together, Jews, Mahometans, or Christians. But then the Heathen nations shall be enlightened with the glorious gospel. There will be a wonderful spirit of pity towards them, and zeal for their instruction and conversion put into multitudes, and many shall go forth and carry the gospel unto them, and then shall the joyful sound be heard among them, and the Sun of righteousness shall then arise with his glorious light shining on those many vast regions of the earth that have been covered with Heathenish darkness for many thousand

years, many of them doubtless ever since the times of Moses and Abraham and have lain thus long in a miserable condition, under the cruel tyranny of the devil, who has all this while blinded and befooled them, and domineered over them, and made a prey of them from generation to generation. Now the glad tidings of the gospel shall sound there, and they shall be brought out of darkness into marvellous light.

It is promised, that Heathenism shall thus be destroyed in many places; God has said, that the gods that have not made these heavens and this earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, Jer. x. 11, and that he will utterly abolish idols, Isa. ii. 18. Then shall the many nations of Africa, the nations of negroes, and other Heathens who chiefly fill that quarter of the world, who now seem to be in a state but little above the beasts, and in many respects much below them, be enlightened with glorious light, and delivered from all their darkness, and shall become a civil, Christian, understanding, and holy people. Then shall the vast continent of America, which now in so great a part of it is covered with barbarous ignorance and cruelty, be everywhere covered with glorious gospel light and Christian love; and instead of worshipping the devil, as now they do, they shall serve God, and praises shall be sung everywhere to the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour of the world. So may we expect it will be in that great and populous part of the world, the East Indies, which are now mostly inhabited by the worshippers of the devil; and so throughout that vast country Great Tartary: and then the kingdom of Christ will be established in those continents which have been more lately discovered towards the north and south poles, where now men differ very little from the wild beasts, excepting that they worship the devil, and beasts do not. The same will be the case with respect to those countries which have never yet been discovered. Thus will be gloriously fulfilled that in Isa. xxxv. 1, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." See also ver. 6, 7.

2. Having thus shown wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist, I come now to the other thing to be observed concerning it, viz., its universal extent. The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up on the ruins of it, everywhere throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled, that "in him and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed;" and Christ now shall become the desire of all nations, agreeable to Hag. ii. 7. Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal sense be extended to all nations, and the whole earth. There are many passages of Scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than that in Isa. xi. 9, "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." As much as to say, as there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea anywhere, but what is covered with water; so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. So it is foretold in Isa. xlv. 22, that all the ends of the earth shall look to Christ, and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

So the most universal expression is used, Dan. vii. 27, "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God." You see the expression includes *all* under the *whole heaven*

When the devil was cast out of the Roman empire, because that was the highest and principal part of the world, and the other nations that were left were low and mean in comparison of those of that empire, it was represented as Satan's being cast out of heaven to the earth, Rev. xii. 9; but it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too, and shut up in hell, Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3. This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass: therefore it is said in Rev. xvi. 17, 18, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And this is the third great dispensation of Providence which is in Scripture compared to Christ's coming to judgment. So it is in Rev. xvi. 15. There, after the sixth vial, and after the devil's armies were gathered together to their great battle, and just before Christ's glorious victory over them, it is said, "Behold I come quickly; blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments." So it is called *Christ's coming* in 2 Thess. ii. 8. Speaking of Antichrist, it is said, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." See also Dan. vii. 13, 14, where Christ's coming to set up his kingdom on earth, and to destroy Antichrist, is called *coming with clouds of heaven*. And this is more like Christ's last coming to judgment, than any of the preceding dispensations which are so called on these accounts.

(1.) That the dispensation is so much greater and more universal, and so more like the day of judgment, which respects the whole world.

(2.) On account of the great spiritual resurrection there will be of the church of God accompanying it, more resembling the general resurrection at the end of the world than any other. This spiritual resurrection, is the resurrection spoken of as attended with judgment, Rev. xx. 4.

(3.) Because of the terrible judgments and fearful destruction which shall now be executed on God's enemies. There will doubtless at the introducing of this dispensation be a visible and awful hand of God against blasphemers, Deists, and obstinate heretics, and other enemies of Christ, terribly destroying them, with remarkable tokens of wrath and vengeance; and especially will this dispensation be attended with terrible judgments on Antichrist; and the cruel persecutors who belong to the church of Rome, shall in a most awful manner be destroyed; which is compared to a casting of Antichrist into the burning flame, Dan. vii. 11, and to casting him alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, Rev. xix. 20.

Then shall this cruel persecuting church suffer those judgments from God, which shall be far more dreadful than her cruelest persecutions of the saints, agreeable to Rev. xviii. 6, 7. The judgments which God shall execute on the enemies of the church, are so great, that they are compared to God's sending great hailstones from heaven upon them, every one of the weight of a talent, as it is said on the pouring out of the seventh vial, Rev. xvi. 21: "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." And now shall be that treading of the wine-press spoken of Rev. xiv. 19, 20.

(4.) This shall put an end to the church's suffering state, and shall be attended with their glorious and joyful praises. The church's afflicted state is long, being continued, excepting some short intermissions, from the resurrection of Christ to this time. But now shall a final end be put to her suffering state. Indeed, after this, near the end of the world, the church shall be greatly

threatened; but it is said, it shall be but for a little season, Rev xx. 3: for as the times of the church's rest are but short, before the long day of her afflictions are at an end; so whatever affliction she may suffer after this, it will be very short; but otherwise the day of the church's affliction and persecution shall now come to a final end. The Scriptures, in many places, speak of this time as the end of the suffering state of the church. So, Isa. li. 22, God says to his church with respect to this time, "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury, thou shalt no more drink it again." Then shall that be proclaimed to the church, Isa. xl. 1, 2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Also, that in Isa. liv. 8, 9, belongs to this time. And so that in Isa. lx. 20, "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." And so Zeph. iii. 15, "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more."

The time which had been before this, had been the church's sowing time, wherein she sowed in tears and in blood; but now is her harvest, wherein she will come again rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her. Now the time of the travail of the woman clothed with the sun is at an end: now she hath brought forth her son; for this glorious setting up of the kingdom of Christ through the world, is what the church had been in travail for, with such terrible pangs, for so many ages: Isa. xxvi. 17, "Like as a woman with child that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord." See Isa. lx. 20, and lxi. 10, 11. And now the church shall forget her sorrows, since a man-child is born into the world: now succeed her joyful praise and triumph. Her praises shall then go up to God from all parts of the earth, as Isa. xlii. 10, 11, 12. And praise shall not only fill the earth, but also heaven. The church on earth, and the church in heaven, shall both gloriously rejoice and praise God, as with one heart, on that occasion. Without doubt it will be a time of very distinguished joy and praise among the holy prophets and apostles, and the other saints in heaven: Rev. xviii. 20, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." See how universal these praises will be in Isa. xliv. 23, "Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." See what joyful praises are sung to God on this occasion by the universal church in heaven and earth, in the beginning of the 19th chapter of Revelation.

(5.) This dispensation is above all preceding ones like Christ's coming to judgment, in that it so puts an end to the former state of the world, and introduces the everlasting kingdom of Christ. Now Satan's visible kingdom shall be overthrown, after it had stood ever since the building of Babel; and the old heavens and the old earth shall in a greater measure be passed away then than before, and the new heavens and the new earth set up in a far more glorious manner than ever before.

Thus I have shown how the success of Christ's purchase has been carried on through the times of the afflicted state of the Christian church, from Christ's resurrection, till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is overthrown. Therefore I come now,

SECONDLY, To show how the success of redemption will be carried on

through that space wherein the Christian church shall for the most part be in a state of peace and prosperity. And in order to this, I would,

1. Speak of the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of this period.

2. The great apostasy there shall be towards the close of it: how greatly then the church shall be threatened by her enemies for a short time.

I. I would speak of the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of this period. And in doing this, I would, 1, Describe this prosperous state of the church; 2, Say something of its duration.

1*st*. I would describe the prosperous state the church shall be in.

And, in the general, I would observe two things.

1. That this is most properly the time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Though the kingdom of heaven was in a degree set up soon after Christ's resurrection, and in a further degree in the time of Constantine; and though the Christian church in all ages of it is called *the kingdom of heaven;* yet this time that we are upon, is the principal time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the time principally intended by the prophecies of Daniel, which speak of the kingdom of heaven, whence the Jews took the name of *the kingdom of heaven.*

2. Now is the principal fulfilment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the glorious times of the gospel which shall be in the latter days. Though there has been a glorious fulfilment of those prophecies already, in the times of the apostles, and of Constantine; yet the expressions are too high to suit any other time entirely, but that which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. This is most properly the glorious day of the gospel. Other times are only forerunners and preparatories to this: other times were the seed-time, but this is the harvest. But more particularly,

(1.) It will be a time of great light and knowledge. The present days are days of darkness, in comparison of those days. The light of that glorious time shall be so great, that it is represented as though there then should be no night, but only day; no evening nor darkness. So Zech. xiv. 6, 7, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark. But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." It is further represented, as though God would then give such light to his church, that it should so much exceed the glory of the light of the sun and moon, that they should be ashamed: Isa. xxiv. 23, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

There is a kind of vail now cast over the greater part of the world, which keeps them in darkness: but then this vail shall be destroyed: Isa. xxv. 7, "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations." And then all countries and nations, even those which are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge. Great knowledge shall prevail everywhere. It may be hoped, that then many of the Negroes and Indians will be divines, and that excellent books will be published in Africa, in Ethiopia, in Tartary, and other now the most barbarous countries; and not only learned men, but others of more ordinary education, shall then be very knowing in religion: Isa. xxxii. 3, 4, "The eyes of them that see, shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear, shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge." Knowledge then shall be very universal among all sorts of persons; agreeably

to Jer xxxi. 34, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

There shall then be a wonderful unravelling of the difficulties in the doctrines of religion, and clearing up of seeming inconsistencies: "So crooked things shall be made straight, and rough places shall be made plain, and darkness shall become light before God's people." Difficulties in Scripture shall then be cleared up, and wonderful things shall be discovered in the word of God, which were never discovered before. The great discovery of those things in religion which had been before kept hid, seems to be compared to removing the vail, and discovering the ark of the testimony to the people, which before used to be kept in the secret part of the temple, and was never seen by them. Thus, at the sounding of the seventh angel, when it is proclaimed, "that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, it is added, that "the temple of God was opened in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." So great shall be the increase of knowledge in this time, that heaven shall be as it were opened to the church of God on earth.

(2.) It shall be a time of great holiness. Now vital religion shall everywhere prevail and reign. Religion shall not be an empty profession, as it now mostly is, but holiness of heart and life shall abundantly prevail. Those times shall be an exception from what Christ says of the ordinary state of the church, viz., that there shall be but few saved; for now holiness shall become general: Isa. lx. 21, "Thy people also shall be all righteous." Not that there will be none remaining in a Christless condition; but that visible wickedness shall be suppressed everywhere, and true holiness shall become general, though not universal. And it shall be a wonderful time, not only for the multitude of godly men, but for eminency of grace. Isa. lxv. 20, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old, but the sinner, being a hundred years old, shall be accursed." And Zech. xii. 8, "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." And holiness shall then be as it were inscribed on every thing, on all men's common business and employments, and the common utensils of life: all shall be as it were dedicated to God, and applied to holy purposes: every thing shall then be done to the glory of God: Isa. xxiii. 18, "And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord." And so Zech. xiv. 20, 21.—And as God's people then shall be eminent in holiness of heart, so they shall be also in holiness of life and practice.

(3.) It shall be a time wherein religion shall in every respect be uppermost in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honor. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under, and wicked men have governed. But now they will be uppermost. The kingdoms shall be given into the hands of the saints of the Most High God," Dan. vii. 27. "And they shall reign on earth," Rev. v. 10. "They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years," Rev. xx. 4. In that day, such persons as are eminent for true piety and religion, shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of king's palaces and thrones; and those who are in highest advancement shall be holy men: Isa. xlix. 23, "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." Kings shall employ all their power, and glory and riches, for the advancement of the honor and glory of Christ, and the good of his church: Isa. lx. 16, "Thou shalt also suck

the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings." And the great men of the world, and the rich merchants, and others who have great wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his church: Psal. xlv. 12, "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favor."

(4.) Those will be times of great peace and love. There shall then be universal peace and a good understanding among the nations of the world, instead of such confusion, wars and bloodshed, as have hitherto been from one age to another: Isa. ii. 4, "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." So it is represented as if all instruments of war should be destroyed, as being become useless: Psal. xlvi. 9, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire." See also Zech. ix. 10. Then shall all nations dwell quietly and safely without fear of any enemy. Isa. xxxii. 18, "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Also Zech. viii. 10, 11.

And then shall malice, and envy, and wrath, and revenge, be suppressed everywhere, and peace and love shall prevail between one man and another; which is most elegantly set forth in Isa. xi. 6—10. Then shall there be peace and love between rulers and ruled. Rulers shall love their people, and with all their might seek their best good; and the people shall love their rulers, and shall joyfully submit to them, and give them that honor which is their due. And so shall there be a happy love between ministers and their people: Mal. iv. 6, "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Then shall flourish in an eminent manner those Christian virtues of meekness, forgiveness, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, brotherly-kindness, those excellent fruits of the Spirit. Men, in their temper and disposition, shall then be like the Lamb of God, the lovely Jesus. The body shall be conformed to the head.

Then shall all the world be united in one amiable society. All nations, in all parts of the world, on every side of the globe, shall then be knit together in sweet harmony. All parts of God's church shall assist and promote the spiritual good of one another. A communication shall then be upheld between all parts of the world to that end; and the art of navigation, which is now applied so much to favor men's covetousness and pride, and is used so much by wicked debauched men, shall then be consecrated to God, and applied to holy uses, as we read in Isa. lx. 5—9. And it will then be a time wherein men will be abundant in expressing their love one to another, not only in words, but in deeds of charity, as we learn, Isa. xxxii. 5: "The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful;" and verse 8, "But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

(5.) It will be a time of excellent order in the church of Christ. The true government and discipline of the church will then be settled and put into practice. All the world shall then be as one church, one orderly, regular, beautiful society. And as the body shall be one, so the members shall be in beautiful proportion to each other. Then shall that be verified in Psal. cxxii. 3, "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together."

(6.) The church of God shall then be beautiful and glorious on these accounts; yea, it will appear in perfection of beauty: Isa. lx. 1, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isa. lxi.

10, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." On these forementioned accounts, the church will be the greatest image of heaven itself.

(7.) That will be a time of the greatest temporal prosperity. Such a spiritual state as we have just described, has a natural tendency to temporal prosperity: it has a tendency to health and long life; and that this will actually be the case, is evident by Zech. viii. 4: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age." It has also a natural tendency to procure ease, quietness, pleasantness, and cheerfulness of mind, and also wealth, and great increase of children; as is intimated in Zech. viii. 5: "And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."—But further, the temporal prosperity of the people of God will also be promoted by a remarkable blessing from heaven: Isa. lxv. 21, "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." And in Mic. iv. 4, "But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid." Zech. viii. 12, "For the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things." See also Jer. xxxi. 12, 13, and Amos ix. 13. Yea, then they shall receive all manner of tokens of God's presence, and acceptance and favor: Jer. xxxiii. 9, "And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." Even the days of Solomon were but an image of those days, as to the temporal prosperity which shall obtain in them.

(8.) It will also be a time of great rejoicing: Isa. xxxv. 10, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Chap. lv. 12, "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you." Chap. lxvi. 11, "That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." Chap. xii. 3, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."—Then will be a time of feasting. That will be the church's glorious wedding day, so far as her wedding with Christ shall ever be upon earth: Rev. xix. 7, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Vers. 9, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."—But I come now,

2dly. To say something of the duration of this state of the church's prosperity. On this I shall be very brief. The Scriptures everywhere represent it to be of long continuance. The former intervals of rest and prosperity, as we before observed, are represented to be but short; but the representations of this state are quite different: Rev. xx. 4, "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus—and they lived and reigned with Christ *a thousand years.*" Isa. lx. 15, "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of *many generations.*"

This may suffice as to the prosperous state of the church through the great-

er part of the period from the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom in the world to Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment.

II. I now come to speak of the great apostasy there should be towards the close of this period, and how imminently the church should be for a short time threatened by her enemies. And this I shall do under three particulars.

1. A little before the end of the world, there shall be a very great apostasy, wherein great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and his church. It is said in Rev. xx. 3, that Satan should be cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and have a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and that after that he must be loosed out of his prison for a little season. And accordingly we are told, in the 7th and 8th verses, that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and should go forth to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. Which seems to show as though the apostasy would be very general. The nations of the four quarters of the earth shall be deceived; and the number of those who shall now turn enemies to Christ shall be vastly great, as the army of Gog and Magog is represented in Ezekiel, and as it is said in Rev. xx. 9, that the number of them is as the sand of the sea, and that they went up on the breadth of the earth, as though they were an army big enough to reach from one side of the earth to the other.

Thus after such a happy and glorious season, such a long day of light and holiness, of love, and peace, and joy, now it shall begin again to be a dark time. Satan shall begin to set up his dominion again in the world. This world shall again become a scene of darkness and wickedness. The bottomless pit of hell shall be opened, and devils shall come up again out of it, and a dreadful smoke shall ascend to darken the world. And the church of Christ, instead of extending to the utmost bounds of the world, as it did before, shall be reduced to narrow limits again. The world of mankind being continued so long in a state of such great prosperity, shall now begin to abuse their prosperity, to serve their lust and corruption. This we learn from Luke xvii. 26, &c.

2. Those apostates shall make great opposition to the church of God. The church shall seem to be imminently threatened with a sudden and entire overthrow by them. It is said, Satan shall gather them together to battle, as the sand on the sea-shore; and they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. So that this beloved city shall seem just ready to be swallowed up by them: for her enemies shall not only threaten her, but shall actually have gathered together against her; and not only so, but shall have besieged her, shall have compassed her about on every side.

There is nothing in the prophecy which seems to hold forth as though the church had actually fallen into their hands, as the church had fallen into the hands of Antichrist, to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. God will never suffer this to be again after the fall of Antichrist; for then the day of her mourning shall be ended. But the church shall seem most imminently threatened with utter and sudden destruction.

3. Now the state of things will seem most remarkably to call for Christ's immediate appearance to judgment. For then the world shall be filled with the most aggravated wickedness that ever it was. For much the greater part of the world shall have become visibly wicked and open enemies to Christ, and their wickedness shall be dreadfully aggravated by their apostasy. Before the

fall of Antichrist, most of the world was full of visibly wicked men. But the greater part of these are poor Heathens, who never enjoyed the light of the Gospel; and others are those that have been bred up in the Mahometan or Popish darkness. But these are those that have apostatized from the Christian church, and the visible kingdom of Christ, in which they enjoyed the great light and privileges of the glorious times of the church, which shall be incomparably greater than the light and privileges which the church of God enjoys now. This apostasy will be most like the apostasy of the devils of any that ever had before been: for the devils apostatized, and turned enemies to Christ, though they enjoyed the light of heaven; and these will apostatize, and turn enemies to him, though they have enjoyed the light and privileges of the glorious times of the church. That such should turn open and avowed enemies to Christ, and should seek the ruin of his church, will cry aloud for such immediate vengeance as was executed on the devils when they fell.

The wickedness of the world will remarkably call for Christ's immediate appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, because of the way in which they shall manifest their wickedness, which will be by scoffing and blaspheming Christ and his holy religion; and particularly, they will scoff at the notion of Christ's coming to judgment, of which the church shall be in expectation, and of which they will warn them. For now doubtless will be another fulfilment, and the greatest fulfilment, of 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own usts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They shall be in no expectation of the coming of Christ to judgment, and shall laugh at the notion. They shall trample all such things under foot, and shall give up themselves to their lusts, or to eat and drink, and wallow in sensual delights, as though they were to be here forever. They shall despise the warnings the church shall give them of the coming of Christ to judgment, as the people of the old world despised what Noah told them of the approaching flood, and as the people of Sodom did when Lot said to them, "The Lord will destroy this city." Their wickedness on this account will cry aloud to heaven for Christ's appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance of his enemies; and also because another way that they shall exercise their wickedness will be in the wicked design and violent attempt they shall be engaged in against the holy city of God, against that holy city, wherein lately, and for so long a time, so much of the religion of Christ had been seen. They shall then be about to perpetrate the most horrid design against this church.

And the numerousness of the wicked that shall then be, is another thing which shall especially call for Christ's coming: for the world will doubtless then be exceeding full of people, having continued so long in so great a state of prosperity, without such terrible desolating extremities, as wars, pestilences, and the like, to diminish them. And the most of this world, which shall be so populous, will be such wicked contemptuous apostates from God. Undoubtedly that will be a day wherein the world will be by far fuller of wickedness than ever before it was from the foundation of it. And if the wickedness of the old world, when men began to multiply on the earth, called for the destruction of the world by a deluge of waters, this wickedness will as much call for its destruction by a deluge of fire.

Again, the circumstances of the church at that day will also eminently call for the immediate appearing of Christ, as they will be compassed about by their blasphemous, murderous enemies, just ready to be swallowed up by them.

And it will be a most distressing time with the church, excepting the comfort they will have in the hope of deliverance from God: for all other help will seem to fail. The case will be come to the last extremity, and there will be an immediate need that Christ should come to their deliverance. And though the church shall be so imminently threatened, yet so will Providence order it, that it shall be preserved till Christ shall appear in his immediate presence, coming in the glory of his Father with all his holy angels. And then will come the time when all the elect shall be gathered in. That work of conversion which has been carried on from the beginning of the church after the fall through all those ages, shall be carried on no more. There never shall another soul be converted. Every one of those many millions, whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, shall be brought in; not one soul shall be lost. And the mystical body of Christ, which has been growing since it first began in the days of Adam, will be complete as to number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect the work of redemption will now be finished. And now the end for which the means of grace have been instituted shall be obtained. All that effect which was intended to be accomplished by them shall now be accomplished.

SECTION II.

Thus I have shown how the success of Christ's redemption has been accomplished during the continuance of the Christian church under the means of grace. We have seen what great revolutions there have been, and are to be, during this space of time; how the great wheels of Providence have gone round for the accomplishment of that kind of success of Christ's purchase, which consists in the bestowment of grace on the elect: and we are, in the prosecution of the subject, come to the time when all the wheels have gone round; the course of things in this state of it is finished, and all things are ripe for Christ's coming to judgment.

You may remember, that when I began to discourse of this third proposition, viz., That from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, the whole time is taken up in procuring the success and effect of Christ's purchase of redemption, I observed, that the success of Christ's purchase is of two kinds, consisting either in grace or glory; and that the success consisting in the former of these, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages that the church is continued under the means of grace; and that the success, consisting in the latter, will chiefly be accomplished at the day of judgment.

Having already shown how the former kind of success has been accomplished, I come now, in the second place, to the latter, viz., that kind of success which is accomplished in the bestowment of glory on the church, which shall chiefly be bestowed on the church at the day of judgment. And here I would mention two or three things in the general concerning this kind of success of Christ's purchase.

1. How great the success of Christ's purchase is, chiefly appears in this The success of Christ's purchase does summarily consist in the salvation of the elect. But this bestowment of glory is eminently called *their salvation:* Heb ix. 28, "To them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." So it is called *redemption*, being eminently that wherein

the redemption of the church consists: so in Eph. iv. 30, "Sealed unto the day of redemption;" and Luke xxi. 28, and Eph. i. 14, "Redemption of the purchased possession."

2. All that is before this, while the church is under the means of grace, is only to make way for the success which is to be accomplished in the bestowment of glory. The means of grace are to fit for glory; and God's grace itself is bestowed on the elect to make them meet for glory.

3. All those glorious things which were brought to pass for the church while under the means of grace, are but images and shadows of this. So were those glorious things which were accomplished for the church in the days of Constantine the Great; and so is all that glory which is to be accomplished in the glorious times of the church which are to succeed the fall of Antichrist. As great as it is, it is all but a shadow of what will be bestowed at the day of judgment: and therefore, as I have already often observed, all those preceding glorious events, by which God wrought glorious things for his church, are spoken of in Scripture as images of Christ's last coming to judgment.

But I hasten more particularly to show how this kind of success of Christ's purchase is accomplished.

1. Christ will appear in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels, coming in the clouds of heaven. When the world is thus revelling in their wickedness, and compassing the holy city about, just ready to destroy it, and when the church is reduced to such a great strait, then shall the glorious Redeemer appear. He through whom this redemption has all along been carried on, he shall appear in the sight of the world; the light of his glory shall break forth; the whole world shall immediately have notice of it, and they shall lift up their eyes and behold this wonderful sight. It is said, "Every eye shall see him," Rev. i. 7. Christ shall appear coming in his human nature, in that same body which was brought forth in a stable, and laid in a manger, and which afterwards was so cruelly used, and nailed to the cross.

Men shall now lift up their eyes, and see him coming in such majesty and glory as now is to us utterly inconceivable. The glory of the sun in a clear firmament, will be but darkness in comparison of it; and all the glorious angels and archangels shall attend upon him, thousand thousands ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand round about him. How different a person will he then appear from what he did at his first coming, when he was as a root out of a dry ground, a poor, despised, afflicted man! How different now is his appearance, in the midst of those glorious angels, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, attending him as his ordinary servants, from what it was when in the midst of a ring of soldiers, with his mock robe and his crown of thorns, to be buffetted and spit upon, or hanging on the cross between two thieves, with a multitude of his enemies about him triumphing over him!

This sight will be a most unexpected sight to the wicked world: it will come as a cry at midnight: they shall be taken in the midst of their wickedness, and it will give them a dreadful alarm. It will at once break upon their revels, their eating, and drinking, and carousing. It will put a quick end to the design of the great army that will then be compassing the camp of the saints: it will make them let drop their weapons out of their hands. The world, which will then be very full of people, most of whom will be wicked men, will then be filled with dolorous shrieking and crying; for all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, Rev. i. 7. And where shall they hide themselves? How will the sight of that awful majesty terrify them when taken in the midst of their wickedness? Then they shall see who he is, what

kind of a person he is, whom they have mocked and scoffed at, and whose church they have been endeavoring to overthrow. This sight will change their voice. The voice of their laughter and singing, while they are marrying and giving in marriage, and the voice of their scoffing, shall be changed into hideous, yea, hellish yelling. Their countenances shall be changed from a show of carnal mirth, haughty pride, and contempt of God's people; it shall put on a show of ghastly terror and amazement; and trembling and chattering of teeth shall seize upon them.

But with respect to the saints, the church of Christ, it shall be a joyful and most glorious sight to them: for this sight will at once deliver them from all fear of their enemies, who were before compassing them about, just ready to swallow them up. Deliverance shall come in their extremity: the glorious Captain of their salvation shall appear for them at a time when no other help appeared. Then shall they lift up their heads, and their redemption shall be drawing nigh, Luke xxi. 28. And thus Christ will appear with infinite majesty, and yet at the same time they shall see infinite love in his countenance to them And thus to see their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, will fill their hearts full of gladness. Their countenances also shall be changed, but not as the countenances of the wicked, but shall be changed from being sorrowful, to be exceeding joyful and triumphant. And now the work of redemption will be finished in another sense, viz., that the whole church shall be completely and eternally freed from all persecution and molestation from wicked men and devils.

2. The last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and the living changed. God sent forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather together his elect from the four corners of the earth in a mystical sense, before the destruction of Jerusalem; i. e., he sent forth the apostles, and others, to preach the gospel all over the world. And so in a mystical sense the great trumpet was blown at the beginning of the glorious times of the church. But now the great trumpet is blown in a more literal sense, with a mighty sound, which shakes the earth. There will be a great signal given by a mighty sound made, which is called *the voice of the archangel*, as being the angel of greatest strength: 1 Thes. iv. 16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." On the sound of the great trumpet, the dead shall be raised everywhere. Now the number of the dead is very great. How many has death cut down for so long a time as since the world has stood! But then the number will be much greater after the world shall have stood so much longer, and through most of the remaining time will doubtless be much fuller of inhabitants than ever it has been. All these shall now rise from the dead. The graves shall be opened everywhere in all parts of the world, and the sea shall give up the innumerable dead that are in it, Rev. xx. 13.

And now all the inhabitants that ever shall have been upon the face of the earth, from the beginning of the world to that time, shall all appear upon earth at once; all that ever have been of the church of God in all ages, Adam and Eve the first parents of mankind, and Abel and Seth, and Methuselah, and all the saints who were their contemporaries, and Noah, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the prophets of Israel, and the saints in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and all that were of the church in their times; and all the holy apostles of Jesus Christ, and all the saints of their times; and all the holy martyrs under the ten Heathen persecutions; and all who belonged to the church in its wilderness state, during the dark times of Antichrist, and all the holy martyrs who

have suffered under the cruelty of the Popish persecutions; and all the saints of the present time, and all the saints who are here in this assembly among the rest; and all that shall be from hence to the end of the world.—Now also all the enemies of the church that have or shall be in all the ages of the world, shall appear upon the face of the earth again; all the wicked killed in the flood, and the multitudes that died all over the world among God's professing people, or others; all that died in all the Heathen nations before Christ, and all wicked Heathens, and Jews, and Mahometans, and Papists, that have died since; all shall come together. Sinners of all sorts; demure hypocrites, those who have the fairest and best outside, and open profane drunkards, whoremasters, heretics, Deists, and all cruel persecutors, and all that have died or shall die in sin amongst us.

And at the same time that the dead are raised, the living shall be changed. The bodies of the wicked who shall then be living, shall be so changed as to fit them for eternal torment without corruption; and the bodies of all the living saints shall be changed to be like Christ's glorious body, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, 53: the bodies of the saints shall be so changed as to render them forever incapable of pain, or affliction, or uneasiness; and all that dulness and heaviness, and all that deformity, which their bodies had before, shall be put off; and they shall put on strength, and beauty, and activity, and incorruptible unfading glory. And in such glory shall the bodies of all the risen saints appear.

And now the work of redemption shall be finished in another respect, viz., that all the elect shall now be actually redeemed in both soul and body. Before this, the work of redemption, as to its actual success, was but incomplete and imperfect; for only the souls of the redeemed were actually saved and glorified, excepting in some few instances: but now all the bodies of the saints shall be saved and glorified together; all the elect shall be glorified in the whole man, and the soul and body in union one with the other.

3. Now shall the whole church of saints be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and all wicked men and devils shall be arraigned before the judgment seat. When the dead saints are raised, then the whole church, consisting of all the elect through all ages, will be standing together on the face of the earth, at least all excepting those few whose bodies were glorified before; and then they shall all mount up as with wings in the air to meet Christ; for it seems that Christ, when he comes to judgment, will not come quite down to the ground, but his throne will be fixed in the air, in the region of the clouds, whence he may be seen by all that vast multitude that shall be gathered before him. The church of saints, therefore, shall be taken up from the earth to ascend up to their Saviour. Thus the apostle tells us, that when the dead in Christ are raised, and the living changed, then those who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord, 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17. What a wonderful sight will that be, when all the many millions of saints are seen thus mounting up from all parts of the world!

Then shall the work of redemption be finished in another respect: then shall the whole church be perfectly and forever delivered from this present evil world, forever forsake this cursed ground: they shall take their everlasting leave of this earth, where they have been strangers, and which has been for the most part such a scene of their trouble and sorrow; where the devil for the most part has reigned as god, and has greatly molested them, and which has been such a scene of wickedness and abomination, where Christ their Lord has been cruelly used; and where they have been so hated, and reproached

and persecuted, from age to age, through most of the ages of the world. They shall leave it under foot to go to Christ, and never shall set foot on it again. And there shall be an everlasting separation made between them and wicked men. Before, they were mixed together, and it was impossible in many instances to determine which were which; but now all shall become visible. Both saints and sinners shall appear in their true characters.

Then shall all the church be seen flocking together in the air to the place where Christ shall have fixed his throne, coming from the east and west, and north and south, to the right hand of Christ. What a mighty cloud of them will there be, when all that ever have been of the church of God, all that were before Christ, all that multitude of saints that were in the apostles' time, and all that were in the days of Constantine the Great, and all that were before and since the Reformation, and also all that great multitude of saints that shall be in all the glorious times of the church, when the whole earth shall for so many generations be full of saints, and also all that shall be then living when Christ shall come; I say, what a cloud of them will there be, when all these are seen flocking together in the region of the clouds at the right hand of Christ!

And then also the work of redemption will be finished in another respect, viz., that then the church shall all be gathered together. They all belonged to one society before, but yet were greatly separated with respect to the place of their habitation; some being in heaven, and some on earth; and those who were on earth together were separated one from another, many of them by wide oceans, and vast continents. But now they shall all be gathered together, never to be separated any more. And not only shall all the members of the church now be gathered together, but all shall be gathered unto their Head, into his immediate glorious presence, never to be separated from him any more. This never came to pass till now.

At the same time, all wicked men and devils shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. These shall be gathered to the left hand of Christ, and, as it seems, will still remain upon the earth, and shall not be caught up into the air, as the saints shall be. The devil, that old serpent, shall now be dragged up out of hell. *He*, that first procured the fall and misery of mankind, and has so set himself against their redemption, and has all along shown himself such an inveterate enemy to the Redeemer; now he shall never more have any thing to do with the church of God, or be suffered in the least to afflict or molest any member of it any more for ever. Instead of that, now he must be judged, and receive the due reward of his deeds. Now is come the time which he has always dreaded, and trembled at the thought of; the time wherein he must be judged, and receive his full punishment. He who by his temptation maliciously procured Christ's crucifixion, and triumphed upon it as though he had obtained the victory, even *he* shall see the consequences of the death of Christ which he procured: for Christ's coming to judge him in his human nature is the consequence of it; for Christ obtained and purchased this glory to himself by that death. Now he must stand before that same Jesus whose death he procured, to be judged, condemned, and eternally destroyed by him. If Satan, the prince of hell, trembles at the thought of it thousands of years beforehand, how much more will he tremble, as proud and as stubborn as he is, when he comes to stand at Christ's bar!

Then shall he also stand at the bar of the saints, whom he has so hated, and afflicted, and molested: for the saints shall judge him with Christ: 1 Cor. vi. 3, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Now shall he be as it

were subdued under the church's feet, agreeable to Rom. xvi. 20.—Satan, when he first tempted our first parents to fall, deceitfully and lyingly told them, that they should be as gods: but little did he think that the consequence should be, that they should indeed be so much as gods, as to be assessors with God to judge him. Much less did he think, that that consequence would follow, that one of that nature which he then tempted, one of the posterity of those persons whom he tempted, should actually be united to God, and that as God he should judge the world, and that he himself must stand trembling and astonished before his judgment seat. But thus all the devils in hell, who have so opposed Christ and his kingdom, shall now at last stand in utmost amazement and horror before Christ and his church, who shall appear to condemn them.

Now also shall all Christ's other enemies be brought to appear before him Now shall wicked, proud scribes and Pharisees, who had such a malignant hatred of Christ while in his state of humiliation, and who persecuted Christ to death, those before whose judgment seat Christ was once called and stood, as a malefactor at their bar, and those who mocked him, and buffeted him, and spit in his face; now shall they see Christ in his glory, as Christ forewarned them in the time of it, Matt. xxvi. 64, 65. *Then* Christ was before their judgment seat; but *now* it is their turn. They shall stand before his judgment seat with inconceivable horror and amazement, with ghastly countenances, and quaking limbs, and chattering teeth, and knees smiting one against another.

Now also all the cruel enemies and persecutors of the church that have been in all ages, shall come in sight together. Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Antiochus Epiphanes, the persecuting scribes and Pharisees, the persecuting Heathen Emperors, Julian the apostate, the cruel persecuting Popes and Papists, Gog and Magog, shall all appear at once before the judgment seat of Christ. They and the saints who have in every age been persecuted by them, shall come in sight one of another, and must confront one another now before the great Judge. And now shall the saints on their glorious thrones be made the judges of those unjust kings and rulers who have before judged and condemned them, and cruelly put them to death. Now shall those persecutors behold the glory to which they are arrived whom they before so cruelly despised and so cruelly used; and Christ will make those holy martyrs as it were to come and set their feet on the necks of their persecutors; they shall be made their footstool.

Thus wonderfully will the face of things be altered from what used to be in the former times of the world; now will all things be coming to rights.

4. The righteousness of the church shall be manifested, and all the wickedness of their enemies shall be brought to light. Those saints who had been the objects of hatred, reproach, and contempt in the world, and were reviled and condemned by their persecutors without a cause, shall now be fully vindicated. They shall now appear clothed with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness. It shall be most manifest before the world, that Christ's righteousness is theirs, and they shall as it were gloriously shine forth in it. And then also shall their inherent holiness be made manifest, and all their good works shall be brought to light. The good things which they did in secret shall now be manifested openly. Those holy ones of God, who had been treated as though they were the filth and offscouring of the earth, as though they were not fit to live upon earth, as worse than beasts or devils, shall now, when things shall appear as they are, appear to have been the excellent of the earth Now God will bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day. And now it shall appear who were those wicked persons that were not fit to live,

when all the wickedness of the enemies of Christ and his church, their pride their malice, their cruelty, their hatred of true religion, shall be set forth in all the horrid acts of it, and with all its aggravations, in its proper colors.

And now the righteous may be heard before this great Judge, who could not be heard before those unjust judges. Now they shall declare their cause and shall rise up in judgment against their persecutors, and shall declare how they have been treated by them. And now all the wickedness of the wicked of the whole world shall be brought to light. All their secret wickedness, and their very hearts, shall be opened to view, and as it were turned inside out before the bright light of that great day; and things that have been spoken in the ear, in the closet, and done in the dark, shall be manifested in the light, and proclaimed before all angels and men that are, ever were, or shall be.

5. The sentence shall be pronounced on the righteous and the wicked. Christ, the glorious judge, shall pass that blessed sentence on the church, at his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This sentence shall be pronounced with infinite love, and the voice will be most sweet, causing every heart to flow with joy. Thus Christ shall pronounce a sentence of justification on thousands and millions, who have before had a sentence of condemnation passed upon them by their persecuting rulers. He will thus put honor upon those who have been before despised: he will own them for his, and will as it were put a crown of glory upon their heads before the world; and then shall they shine forth as the sun with Jesus Christ in glory and joy, in the sight of all their enemies.

And then shall the sentence of condemnation be passed on the wicked, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Thus shall the church's enemies be condemned; in which sentence of condemnation, the holy martyrs, who have suffered from them, shall concur. When the words of this sentence are pronounced, they will strike every heart of those at the left hand with inconceivable horror and amazement. Every syllable of it will be more terrible than a stream of lightning through their hearts. We can conceive but very little of those signs and expressions of horror which there will be upon it, of shrieking, quaking, gnashing of teeth, distortions of countenance, hideous looks, hideous actions, and hideous voices, through all that vast throng.

6. Upon this Christ and all his church of saints, and all the holy angels ministering to them, shall leave this lower world, and ascend up towards the highest heavens. Christ shall ascend in as great glory, as he descended, and in some respects greater: for now he shall ascend with his elect church with him, glorified in both body and soul. Christ's first ascension to heaven soon after his own resurrection was very glorious. But this his second ascension, the ascension of his mystical body, his whole church, shall be far more glorious. The redeemed church shall all ascend with him in a most joyful and triumphant manner; and all their enemies and persecutors, who shall be left behind on the accursed ground to be consumed, shall see the sight, and hear their songs.

And thus Christ's church shall forever leave this accursed world, to go into that more glorious world, the highest heavens, into the paradise of God, the kingdom that was prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

7. When they are gone, this world shall be set on fire, and be turned into a great furnace, wherein all the enemies of Christ and his church shall be tormented forever and ever. This is manifest by 2 Pet. iii. 7, "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved

unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." When Christ and his church are ascended to a distance from this world, that miserable company of wicked being left behind, to have their sentence executed upon them here, then, some way or other, this whole lower world shall be set on fire, either by fire from heaven, or by fire breaking out of the bowels of the earth, or both, as it was with the water in the time of the deluge. However, this lower world shall be set all on fire. How will it strike the wicked with horror, when the fire begins to lay hold upon them, and they find no way to escape it, or flee or hide from it! What shrieking and crying will there be among those many thousand and millions, when they begin to enter into this great furnace, when the whole world shall be a furnace of the fiercest and most raging heat! Insomuch that the Apostle Peter says, 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12, that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up;" and that the "heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." And so fierce shall be its heat that it shall burn the earth into its very centre; which seems to be what is meant, Deut. xxxii. 22, "For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."

And here shall all the persecutors of the church of God burn in everlasting fire, who have before burnt the saints at the stake, and shall suffer torments far beyond all that their utmost wit and malice could inflict on the saints. And here the bodies of all the wicked shall burn, and be tormented to all eternity, and never be consumed; and the wrath of God shall be poured out on their souls. Though the souls of the wicked in hell do now suffer dreadful punishment, yet their punishment will be so increased at the day of judgment, that what they suffered before is, in comparison of it, as an imprisonment, to the execution which follows it. And now the devil, that old serpent, shall receive his full punishment; now shall that which he before trembled for fear of, fully come upon him. This world, which formerly used to be the place of his kingdom, where he set up himself as God, shall now be the place of his complete punishment, and full and everlasting torment.

And in this, one design of the work of redemption which has been mentioned, viz., putting Christ's enemies under his feet, shall be perfectly accomplished. His enemies shall now be made his footstool in the fullest degree. Now shall be the most perfect fulfilment of that in Gen. iii. 15, "It shall bruise thy head."

8. At the same time all the church shall enter with Christ their glorious Lord into the highest heaven, and there shall enter on the state of their highest and eternal blessedness and glory. While the lower world, which they have left under their feet, is seized with the fire of God's vengeance, and flames are kindling upon it, and the wicked are entering into everlasting fire, the whole church shall enter, with their glorious head, and all the holy angels attending, in a joyful manner into the eternal paradise of God, the palace of the great Jehovah, their heavenly Father. The gates shall open wide for them to enter, and there Christ will bring them into his chambers in the highest sense. He will bring them into his Father's house, into a world not like that which they have left. Here Christ will bring them, and present them in glory to his Father, saying, "Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me;" as much as to say, Here am I, with every one of those whom thou gavest me from eternity to take the care of, that they might be redeemed and glorified, and to redeem whom I have done and suffered so much, and to make way for the redemption

of whom I have for so many ages been accomplishing such great changes. Here they are now perfectly redeemed in body and soul; I have perfectly delivered them from all the ill fruits of the fall, and perfectly freed them from all their enemies; I have brought them all together into one glorious society, and united them all in myself: I have openly justified them before all angels and men, and here I have brought them all away from that accursed world where they have suffered so much, and have brought them before thy throne: I have done all that for them which thou hast appointed me; I have perfectly cleansed them from all filthiness in my blood, and here they are in perfect holiness, shining with thy perfect image.

And then the Father will accept of them, and own them all for his children, and will welcome them to the eternal and perfect inheritance and glory of his house, and will on this occasion give more glorious manifestations of his love than ever before, and will admit them to a more full and perfect enjoyment of himself.

And now shall be the marriage of the Lamb in the most perfect sense. The commencement of the glorious times of the church on earth, after the fall of Antichrist, is represented as the marriage of the Lamb; and this shall be the marriage of the Lamb in the highest sense that ever shall be on earth: but after this we read of another marriage of the Lamb at the close of the day of judgment. After the beloved disciple had given an account of the day of judgment, in the close of the 20th chapter of Revelation, then he proceeds to give an account of what follows in the 21st and 22d chapters: and in the 2d verse of the 21st chapter, he gives an account that he saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And when Christ shal bring his church into his Father's house in heaven, after the judgment, he shall bring her thither as his bride, having there presented her, whom he loved and gave himself for, to himself, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The bridegroom and the bride shall then enter into heaven, both having on their wedding robes, attended with all the glorious angels. And there they enter on the feast and joys of their marriage before the Father; they shall then begin an everlasting wedding day. This shall be the day of the gladness of Christ's heart, wherein he will greatly rejoice, and all the saints shall rejoice with him. Christ shall rejoice over his bride, and the bride shall rejoice in her husband, in the state of her consummate and everlasting blessedness, of which we have a particular description in the 21st and 22d chapers of Revelation.

And now the whole work of redemption is finished. We have seen how it has been carrying on from the fall of man to this time. But now it is complete with respect to all that belongs to it. Now the top-stone of the building is laid.

In the progress of the discourse on this subject, we have followed the church of God in all the great changes, all her tossings to and fro that she has been subject to, in all the storms and tempests through the many ages of the world, till at length we have seen an end to all these storms. We have seen her enter the harbor, and landed in the highest heavens, in complete and eternal glory in all her members, soul and body. We have gone through time, and the several ages of it, as the providence of God, and the word of God, have led us; and now we have issued into eternity after time shall be no more. We have seen all the church's enemies fixed in endless misery, and have seen the church presented in her perfect redemption before the Father in heaven, there to enjoy this most unspeakable and inconceivable glory and blessedness; and there we leave her to enjoy this glory throughout the never ending ages of eternity.

Now all Christ's enemies will be perfectly put under his feet, and he shall

have his most perfect triumph over sin and Satan, and all his instruments, and death, and hell. Now shall all the promises made to Christ by God the Father before the foundation of the world, the promises of the covenant of redemption, be fully accomplished. And Christ shall now perfectly have obtained the joy that was set before him, for which he undertook those great sufferings which he underwent in his state of humiliation. Now shall all the hopes and expectations of the saints be fulfilled. The state of things that the church was in before, was a progressive and preparatory state: but now she is arrived to her most perfect state of glory. All the glory of the glorious times of the church on earth is but a faint shadow of this her consummate glory in heaven.

And now Christ the great Redeemer shall be most perfectly glorified, and God the Father shall be glorified in him, and the Holy Ghost shall be most fully glorified in the perfection of his work on the hearts of all the church.—And now shall that new heaven and new earth, or that renewed state of things, which had been building up ever since Christ's resurrection, be completely finished, after the very material frame of the old heavens and old earth are destroyed: Rev. xxi. 1, "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."—And now will the great Redeemer have perfected every thing that appertains to the work of redemption, which he began so soon after the fall of man. And who can conceive of the triumph of those praises which shall be sung in heaven on this great occasion, so much greater than that of the fall of Antichrist, which occasions such praises as we have described in the 19th chapter of Revelation! The beloved disciple John seems to want expressions to describe those praises, and says, "It was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." But much more inexpressible will those praises be, which will be sung in heaven after the final consummation of all things. Now shall the praises of that vast and glorious multitude be as mighty thunderings indeed!

And now how are all the former things passed away, and what a glorious state are things fixed in to remain to all eternity!—And as Christ, when he first entered on the work of redemption after the fall of man, had the kingdom committed to him of the Father, and had took on himself the administration of the affairs of the universe, to manage all so as to subserve the purposes of this affair; so now, the work being finished, he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father: 1 Cor. xv. 24, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." Not that Christ shall cease to reign or have a kingdom after this; for it is said, Luke i. 33, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." So in Dan. vii. 14, that "his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." But the meaning is, that Christ shall deliver up that kingdom or dominion which he has over the world, as the Father's delegate or vicegerent, which the Father committed to him, to be managed in subserviency to this great design of redemption. The end of this commission, or delegation, which he had from the Father, seems to be to subserve this particular design of redemption; and therefore, when that design is fully accomplished, the commission will cease, and Christ will deliver it up to the Father, from whom he received it.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE WHOLE.

I proceed now to enter upon some improvement of the whole that has been said from this doctrine.

I. Hence we may learn how great a work this work of redemption is. We have now had it in a very imperfect manner set forth before us, in the whole progress of it, from its first beginning after the fall, to the end of the world, when it is finished. We have seen how God has carried on this building from the first foundation of it, by a long succession of wonderful works, advancing it higher and higher from one age to another, till the top-stone is laid at the end of the world. And now let us consider how great a work this is. Do men, when they behold some great palaces or churches, sometimes admire their magnificence, and are almost astonished to consider how great a piece of work it was to build such a house? Then how well may we admire the greatness of this building of God, which he builds up age after age, by a series of such great things which he brings to pass! There are three things that have been exhibited to us in what has been said, which do especially show the greatness of the work of redemption.

1. The greatness of those particular events, and dispensations of Providence, by which it is accomplished. How great are those things which God has done, which are but so many parts of this great work! What great things were done in the world to prepare the way for Christ's coming to purchase, and what great things were done in the purchase of redemption! What a wonderful thing was that which was accomplished to put Christ in an immediate capacity for this purchase, viz., his incarnation, that God should become man! And what great things were done in that purchase, that a person who is the eternal Jehovah, should live upon earth for four or five and thirty years together, in a mean, despised condition, and that he should spend his life in such labors and sufferings, and that at last he should die upon the cross! And what great things have been done to accomplish the success of Christ's redemption! What great things to put him into a capacity to accomplish this success! For this purpose he rose from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and all things were made subject to him. How many miracles have been wrought, what mighty revolutions have been brought to pass, in order to it!

2. The number of those great events by which God carries on this work, shows the greatness of the work. Those mighty revolutions are so many as to fill up many ages. The particular wonderful events by which the work of creation was carried on filled up six days: but the great dispensations by which the work of redemption is carried on, are so many, that they fill up six or seven thousand years at least, as we have reason to conclude from the word of God. —There were great things wrought in this affair before the flood, and in the flood the world was once destroyed by water, and God's church was so wonderfully preserved from the flood in order to carry on this work. And after the flood, what great things did God work relating to the resettling of the world, to the building of Babel, the dispersing of the nations, the shortening of the days of man's life, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and that long series of wonderful providences relating to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and those wonders in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, and in Canaan in Joshua's time, and by a long succession of wonderful providences from age to age, towards the nation of the Jews!

What great things were wrought by God, in so often overturning the world

before Christ came, to make way for his coming! What great things were done also in Christ's time, and then after that in overturning Satan's kingdom in the Heathen empire, and in so preserving his church in the dark times of Popery, and in bringing about a reformation! How many great and wonderful things will be effected in accomplishing the glorious times of the church, and at Christ's last coming on the day of judgment, in the destruction of the world, and in carrying the whole church into heaven.

3. The glorious issue of this whole affair, in the perfect and eternal destruction of the wicked, and in the consummate glory of the righteous. And now let us once more take a view of this building, now all is finished and the top-stone laid. It appeared in a glorious height in the apostles' time, and much more glorious in the time of Constantine, and will appear much more glorious still after the fall of Antichrist; but at the consummation of all things, it appears in an immensely more glorious height than ever before. Now it appears in its greatest magnificence, as a complete lofty structure, whose top reaches to the heaven of heavens; a building worthy of the great God, the King of kings.

And from what has been said, one may argue that the work of redemption is the greatest of all God's works of which we have any notice, and it is the end of all his others works. It appears plainly from what has been said, that this work is the principal of all God's works of providence, and that all other works of providence are reducible hither; they are all subordinate to the great affair of redemption. We see that all the revolutions in the world are to subserve this grand design; so that the work of redemption is, as it were, the sum of God's works of providence.

This shows us how much greater the work of redemption is, than the work of creation: for I have several times observed, that the work of providence is greater than the work of creation, because it is the end of it; as the use of a house is the end of the building of the house. But the work of redemption, as I have just said, is the sum of all God's works of providence: all are subordinate to it: so the work of the new creation is more excellent than the old. So it ever is, that when one thing is removed by God to make way for another, the new one excels the old. Thus the temple excelled the tabernacle; the new covenant, the old; the new dispensation of the gospel, the dispensation of Moses; the throne of David, the throne of Saul; the priesthood of Christ, the priesthood of Aaron; the new Jerusalem, the old; and so the new creation far excels the old.

God has used the creation which he has made, for no other purpose but to subserve the designs of this affair. To answer this end, he hath created and disposed of mankind; to this the angels, to this the earth, to this the highest heavens. God created the world to provide a spouse and a kingdom for his Son. And the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual marriage of the spouse to him, is what the whole creation labors and travails in pain to bring to pass. This work of redemption is so much the greatest of all the works of God, that all other works are to be looked upon either as parts of it, or appendages to it, or are some way reducible to it; and so all the decrees of God do some way or other belong to that eternal covenant of redemption which was between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world Every decree of God is some way or other reducible to that covenant.

And seeing this work of redemption is so great a work, hence we need not wonder that the angels desire to look into it. And we need not wonder that so much is made of it in Scripture, and that it is so much insisted on in the histories, and prophecies, and songs of the Bible; for the work of redemption is the

great subject of the whole of its doctrines, its promises, its types, its songs, its histories, and its prophecies.

II. Hence we may learn how God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending of all things. Such are the characters and titles we find often ascribed to God in Scripture, in those places where the Scripture speaks of the course of things, and series of events in providence: Isa. xli. 4, "Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first and with the last; I am he." And particularly does the Scripture ascribe such titles to God, where it speaks of the providence of God, as it relates to, and is summed up in the great work of redemption: as Isa. xliv. 6, 7, and xlviii. 12, with the context, beginning with the 9th verse. So God eminently appears as the first and the last, by considering the whole scheme of divine Providence as we have considered it, viz., as all reducible to that one great work of redemption.

And therefore, when Christ reveals the future great events of Providence relating to his church and people, and this affair of redemption to the end of the world, to his disciple John, he often reveals himself under this character. So Rev. i. 8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." So again, verses 10, 11, "I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Alpha and Omega, are the names of the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet, as A and Z are of ours; and therefore it signifies the same as his being the first and the last and the beginning and the ending.

Thus God is called in the beginning of this book of Revelation, before the course of the prophecy begins; and so again he is called at the end of it, after the course of events is gone through, and the final issue of things is seen: as Rev. xxi. 6, "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." And so chap. xxii. 12, 13, "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

We have seen how this is true in the course of what I have laid before you upon this subject. We have seen how things were from God in the beginning; on what design God began the course of his providence in the beginning of the generations of men upon the earth; and we have seen how it is God that has all along carried things on agreeable to the same designs without ever failing; and how at last the conclusion and final issue of things are to God; and so we have seen how all things are of him, and through him, and to him; and therefore may well now cry out with the apostle, Rom. xi. 33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" And verse 36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."

We have seen how other things came to an end one after another; how states, and kingdoms, and empires, one after another, fell and came to nothing, even the greatest and strongest of them; we have seen how the world has been often overturned, and will be more remarkably overturned than ever it has been yet; we have seen how the world comes to an end, how it was first destroyed by water, and how at last it shall be utterly destroyed by fire: but yet God remains the same through all ages. He was before the beginning of this course of things, and he will be after the end of them; agreeably to Psal. cii. 25, 26.—Thus God is he that is, and that was, and that is to come.

We have seen, in a variety of instances, how all other gods perish, we have seen how the ancient gods of the Heathen, in the nations about Canaan, and throughout the Roman empire, are all destroyed, and their worship long since overthrown; we have heard how Antichrist, who has called himself a god on earth, and how Mahomet, who claims religious honors, and how all the gods of the Heathen through the world, will come to an end: and how Satan, the great dragon, that old serpent, who has set up himself as god of this world, will be cast into the lake of fire, there to suffer his complete punishment: but Jehovah remains, and his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there is no end. We have seen what mighty changes there have been in the world; but God is unchangeable, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

We began at the head of the stream of divine Providence, and have followed and traced it through its various windings and turnings, till we are come to the end of it, and we see where it issues. As it began in God, so it ends in God.—God is the infinite ocean into which it empties itself.—Providence is like a mighty wheel, whose circumference is so high that it is dreadful, with the glory of the God of Israel above upon it; as it is represented in Ezekiel's vision. We have seen the revolution of this wheel, and how, as it was from God, so its return has been to God again. All the events of divine Providence are like the links of a chain; the first link is from God, and the last is to him.

III. We may see by what has been said, how Christ, in all things, has the pre-eminence. For this great work of redemption is all his work; he is the great Redeemer, and therefore the work of redemption, being as it were the sum of God's works of providence, this shows the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as being above all, and through all, and in all. That God intended the world for his Son's use in the affair of redemption, is one reason that is to be given why he created the world by him, which seems to be intimated by the apostle in Eph. iii. 9—12. What has been said, shows how all the purposes of God are purposed in Christ, and how he is before all and above all, and all things consist by him, and are governed by him, and are for him, Colos. i. 15, 16, 17, 18. We see by what has been said, how God makes him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth, and sets his throne above their thrones; how God has always upheld his kingdom, when the kingdoms of others have come to an end; how that appears at last above all, however greatly opposed for so many ages; how, finally, all other kingdoms fell, and his kingdom is the last kingdom, and is a kingdom that never gives place to any other.

We see, that whatever changes there are, and however highly Christ's enemies exalt themselves, that yet finally all his enemies become his footstool, and he reigns in uncontrolled power and immense glory: in the end his people are all perfectly saved and made happy, and his enemies all become his footstool. And thus God gives the world to his Son for his inheritance.

IV. Hence we may see what a consistent thing divine providence is. The consideration of what has been said, may greatly serve to show us the consistency, order, and beauty, of God's works of providence. If we behold the events of Providence in any other view than that in which it has been set before us, it will all look like confusion, like a number of jumbled events coming to pass without any order or method, like the tossings of the waves of the sea; things will look as though one confused revolution came to pass after another, merely by blind chance, without any regular or certain end.

But if we consider the events of providence in the light in which they have been set before us under this doctrine, in which the Scriptures set them before

us, they appear far from being jumbled and confused, an orderly series of events, all wisely ordered and directed in excellent harmony and consistence, tending all to one end. The wheels of providence are not turned round by blind chance, but they are full of eyes round about, as Ezekiel represents, and they are guided by the Spirit of God: where the Spirit goes, they go: and all God's works of providence, through all ages, meet in one at last, as so many lines meeting in one centre

It is with God's work of providence, as it is with his work of creation; it is but one work. The events of providence are not so many distinct, independent works of providence, but they are rather so many different parts of one work of providence: it is all one work, one regular scheme. God's works of providence are not disunited and jumbled, without connection or dependence, but are all united, just as the several parts of one building: there are many stones, many pieces of timber, but all are so joined, and fitly framed together, that they make but one building: they have all but one foundation, and are united at last in one top-stone.

God's providence may not unfitly be compared to a large and long river, having innumerable branches, beginning in different regions, and at a great distance one from another, and all conspiring to one common issue. After their very diverse and contrary courses, which they held for a while, yet they all gather more and more together, the nearer they come to their common end, and all at length discharge themselves at one mouth into the same ocean. The different streams of this river are apt to appear like mere jumble and confusion to us, because of the limitedness of our sight, whereby we cannot see from one branch to another, and cannot see the whole at once, so as to see how all are united in one. A man who sees but one or two streams at a time, cannot tell what their course tends to. Their course seems very crooked, and different streams seem to run for a while different and contrary ways: and if we view things at a distance, there seem to be innumerable obstacles and impediments in the way to hinder their ever uniting and coming to the ocean, as rocks, and mountains, and the like; but yet if we trace them, they all unite at last, and all come to the same issue, disgorging themselves in one into the same great ocean. Not one of all the streams fail of coming hither at last.

V. From the whole that has been said, we may strongly argue, that the Scriptures are the word of God, because they alone inform us what God is about, or what he aims at in these works which he is doing in the world. God doubtless is pursuing some design, and carrying on some scheme, in the various changes and revolutions which from age to age come to pass in the world. It is most reasonable to suppose, that there is some certain great design to which Providence subordinates all the great successive changes in the affairs of the world which God has made. It is reasonable to suppose that all revolutions, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, are but the various parts of the same scheme, all conspiring to bring to pass that great event which the great Creator and Governor of the world has ultimately in view; and that the scheme will not be finished, nor the design fully accomplished, and the great and ultimate event fully brought to pass till the end of the world, and the last revolution is brought about.

Now there is nothing else that informs us what this scheme and design of God in his works is, but only the Holy Scriptures. Nothing else pretends to set in view the whole series of God's works of providence from beginning to end, and to inform us how all things were from God at first, and for what end they are, and how they were ordered from the beginning, and how they will pro-

ceed to the end of the world, and what they will come to at last, and how then all things shall be to God. Nothing else but the Scriptures has any pretence for showing any manner of regular scheme or drift in those revolutions which God orders from age to age. Nothing else pretends to show what God would effect by the things which he has done, and is doing, and will do; what he seeks and intends by them. Nothing else pretends to show, with any distinctness or certainty, how the world began at first, or to tell us the original of things. Nothing but the Scriptures sets forth how God governed the world from the beginning of the generations of men upon the earth, in an orderly history; and nothing else sets before us how he will govern it to the end by an orderly prophecy of future events; agreeable to the challenge which God makes to the gods, and prophets, and teachers of the Heathen, in Isa. xli. 22, 23: "Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods."

Reason shows that it is fit and requisite, that the intelligent and rational beings of the world should know something of God's scheme and design in his works; for they doubtless are the beings that are principally concerned. The thing that is God's great design in his works, is doubtless something concerning his reasonable creatures, rather than brute beasts and lifeless things. The revolutions by which God's great design is brought to pass, are doubtless revolutions chiefly among them, and which concern their state, and not the state of things without life or reason. And therefore surely it is requisite that they should know something of it; especially seeing that reason teaches that God has given his rational creatures reason and a capacity of seeing God in his works; for this end, that they may see God's glory in them, and give him the glory of them. But how can they see God's glory in his works, if they do not know what God's design in them is, and what he aims at by what he is doing in the world?

And further, it is fit that mankind should be informed something of God's design in the government of the world, because they are made capable of actively falling in with that design, and promoting of it, and acting herein as his friends and subjects; it is therefore reasonable to suppose, that God has given mankind some revelation to inform them of this; but there is nothing else that does it but the Bible. In the Bible this is done. Hence we may learn an account of the first original of things, and an orderly account of the scheme of God's works from the first beginning, through those ages that are beyond the reach of all other histories. Here we are told what God aims at in the whole, what is the great end, how he has contrived the grand design he drives at, and the great things he would accomplish by all. Here we have a most rational, excellent account of this matter, worthy of God, and exceedingly showing forth the glory of his perfections, his majesty, his wisdom, his glorious holiness, and grace and love, and his exaltation above all, showing how he is the first and the last.

Here we are shown the connection of the various parts of the work of providence, and how all harmonizes, and is connected together in a regular, beautiful, and glorious frame.—In the Bible we have an account of the whole scheme of providence, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, either in history or prophecy, and are told what will become of things at last; how they will be finished off by a great day of judgment, and will issue in the subduing of God's enemies, and in the salvation and glory of his church, and setting up of the everlasting kingdom of his Son.

How rational, worthy, and excellent a revelation is this! And how excellent a book is the Bible, which contains so much beyond all other books in the world! And what characters are here of its being indeed a divine book! A book that the great Jehovah has given to mankind for their instruction, without which we should be left in miserable darkness and confusion.

VI. From what has been said, we may see the glorious majesty and power of God in this affair of redemption: especially is God glorious in his power. His glorious power appears in upholding his church for so long a time, and carrying on this work; upholding it oftentimes when it was but as a little spark of fire, or as smoking flax, in which the fire was almost gone out, and the powers of earth and hell were combined to destroy it. Yet God has never suffered them to quench it, and finally will bring forth judgment unto victory. God glorifies his strength in his church's weakness; in causing his people, who are like a number of little infants, finally to triumph over all earth and hell; so that they shall tread on the lion and adder; the young lion and dragon shall they trample under foot. The glorious power of God appears in conquering his many and mighty enemies by that person who was once an infant in a manger, and appeared as a poor, weak, despised man. He conquers them, and triumphs over them in their own weapon, the cross.

The glorious majesty of God appears in conquering all those mighty enemies of the church one age after another; in conquering Satan, that proud and strong spirit, and all his hellish host; in bringing him down under foot, long after he had vaunted himself as god of this world, and when he did his utmost to support himself in his kingdom.

God's power gloriously appears in conquering Satan when exalted in that strongest and most potent Heathen kingdom that ever he had, the Roman empire. Christ, our Michael, has overcome him, and the devil was cast out, and there was found no more place for him in heaven; but he was cast out unto the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Again, his power gloriously appears in conquering him in that kingdom wherein his pride, and subtlety, and cruelty, above all appears, viz., the kingdom of Antichrist. It gloriously appears in conquering him in that greatest and strongest combination and opposition of the devil and his adherents against Christ and his church, just before the fall of Antichrist, wherein his visible kingdom has a fatal blow given it, on which a universal downfall of it follows all over the world.

The glorious power of God appears in thus conquering the devil, and bringing him under foot, time after time, after long time given him to strengthen himself to his utmost, as he was once overthrown in his Heathen Roman empire, after he had been making himself strong in those parts of the world, ever since the building of Babel. It appears also in overthrowing his kingdom more fatally and universally all over the world, after he had again another opportunity given him to strengthen himself to his utmost for many ages, by setting up those two great kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and to establish his interest in the Heathen world. We have seen how these kingdoms of God's enemies, that, before God appears, look strong, as though it was impossible to overthrow them; yet, time after time, when God appears, they seem to melt away, as the fat of lambs before the fire, and are driven away as the chaff before the whirlwind, or the smoke out of the chimney.

Those mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, which have made such a figure for so many ages together, and have trampled the world under foot, when God comes to appear, will vanish away like a shadow, and will as it were disappear of themselves, and come to nothing, as the darkness in a room

does, when the light is brought in. What are God's enemies n his hands? How is their greatest strength weakness when he rises up! And how weak will they all appear together at the day of judgment! Thus we may apply those words in the song of Moses, Exod. xv. 6, "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." And how great doth the majesty of God appear in overturning the world from time to time, to accomplish his designs, and at last in causing the earth and heavens to flee away, for the advancement of the glory of his kingdom!

VII. From what has been said, we may see the glorious wisdom of God. It shows the wisdom of God in creating the world, in that he has created it for such an excellent use, to accomplish in it so glorious a work. And it shows the wisdom of Divine Providence, that he brings such great good out of such great evil, in making the fall and ruin of mankind, which in itself in so sorrowful and deplorable, an occasion of accomplishing such a glorious work as this work of redemption, and of erecting such a glorious building, whose top should reach unto heaven, and of bringing his elect to a state of such unspeakable happiness. And how glorious doth the wisdom of God appear in that long course and series of great changes in the world, in bringing such order out of confusion, in so frustrating the devil, and so wonderfully turning all his most subtle machinations to his own glory, and the glory of his Son Jesus Christ! And in causing the greatest works of Satan, those in which he has most vaunted himself, to be wholly turned into occasions of so much the more glorious triumph of his Son Jesus Christ? And how wonderful is the wisdom of God, in bringing all such manifold and various changes and overturnings in the world to such a glorious period at last, and in so directing all the wheels of providence by his skilful hand, that every one of them conspires, as the manifold wheels of a most curious machine, at last to strike out such an excellent issue, such a manifestation of the divine glory, such happiness to his people, and such a glorious and everlasting kingdom to his Son!

VIII. From what has been said, we may see the stability of God's mercy and faithfulness to his people; how he never forsakes his inheritance, and remembers his covenant to them through all generations. Now we may see what reason there was for the words of the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall endure forever and ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." And now we may see abundant reason for that name of God which he reveals to Moses, Exod. iii. 14: "And God said unto Moses, *I am that I am;*" i. e., I am the same that I was when I entered into covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and ever shall be the same; I shall keep covenant forever: I am self-sufficient, all-sufficient, and immutable.

And now we may see the truth of that, Psal. xxxvi. 5, 6, "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep." And if we consider what has been said, we need not wonder that the Psalmist, in the 136th Psalm, so often repeats this, *For his mercy endureth forever;* as if he were in an ecstasy at the consideration of the perpetuity of God's mercy to his church, and delighted to think of it, and knew not how but continually to express it. Let us with like pleasure and joy celebrate the everlasting duration of God's mercy and faithfulness to his church and people, and let us be comforted by it under the present dark circumstances of the church of God, and all the uproar and confusions that are in the world, and all the threatenings of the

church's enemies. And let us take encouragement earnestly to pray for those glorious things which God has promised to accomplish for his church

IX. Hence we may learn how happy a society the church of Christ is. For all this great work is for them. Christ undertook it for their sakes, and for their sakes he carries it on, from the fall of man to the end of the world; it is because he has loved them with an everlasting love. For their sakes he overturns states and kingdoms. For their sakes he shakes heaven and earth. He gives men for them, and people for their life. Since they have been precious in God's sight, they have been honorable; and therefore he first gives the blood of his own Son to them, and then, for their sakes, gives the blood of all their enemies, many thousands and millions, all nations that stand in their way, as a sacrifice to their good.

For their sakes he made the world, and for their sakes he will destroy it: for their sakes he built heaven, and for their sakes he makes his angels ministering spirits. Therefore the apostle says, as he does 1 Cor. iii. 21, &c., "All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." How blessed is this people who are redeemed from among men, and are the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb; who have God in all ages for their protection and help! Deut. xxxiii. 29, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

Let who will prevail now, let the enemies of the church exalt themselves as much as they will, these are the people that shall finally prevail. The last kingdom shall finally be theirs; the kingdom shall finally be given into their hands, and shall not be left to other people. We have seen what a blessed issue things shall finally be brought to as to them, and what glory they shall arrive at, and remain in possession of, forever and ever, after all the kingdoms of the world are come to an end, and the earth is removed, and mountains are carried into the depth of the sea, or where the sea was, and this lower earth shall all be dissolved. O happy people, and blessed society! Well may they spend an eternity in praises and hallelujahs to him who hath loved them from eternity, and will love them to eternity.

X. And, lastly, hence all wicked men, all that are in a Christless condition, may see their exceeding misery. You that are such, whoever you are, you are those who shall have no part or lot in this matter. You are never the better for any of those things of which you have heard: yea, your guilt is but so much the greater, and the misery you are exposed to so much the more dreadful. You are some of that sort, against whom God, in the progress of the work, exercises so much manifest wrath; some of those enemies who are liable to be made Christ's footstool, and to be ruled with a rod of iron, and to be dashed in pieces. You are some of the seed of the serpent, to bruise the head of which is one great design of all this work. Whatever glorious things God accomplishes for his church, if you continue in the state you are now in, they will not be glorious to you. The most glorious times of the church are always the most dismal times to the wicked and impenitent. This we are taught in Isa. lxvi. 14. And so we find, wherever glorious things are foretold concerning the church, there terrible things are foretold concerning the wicked, its enemies. And so it ever has been in fact; in all remarkable deliverances wrought for the church, there has been also a remarkable execution of wrath on its enemies. So it was when God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt; a

the same time he remarkably poured out his wrath on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. So when he brought them into Canaan by Joshua, and gave them that good land, he remarkably executed wrath upon the Canaanites. So when they were delivered out of their Babylonish captivity, signal vengeance was inflicted on the Babylonians. So when the Gentiles were called, and the elect of God were saved by the preaching of the apostles, Jerusalem and the persecuting Jews were destroyed in a most awful manner. I might observe the same concerning the glory accomplished to the church in the days of Constantine, at the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom in the downfall of Antichrist, and at the day of judgment. In all these instances, and especially in the last, there have been, or will be, exhibited most awful tokens of the divine wrath against the wicked. And to this class of men you belong.

You are indeed some of that sort that God will make use of in this affair; but it will be for the glory of his justice, and not of his mercy. You are some of those enemies of God who are reserved for the triumph of Christ's glorious power in overcoming and punishing them. You are some of that sort that shall be consumed with this accursed world after the day of judgment, when Christ and his church shall triumphantly and gloriously ascend to heaven.

Therefore let all that are in a Christless condition amongst us seriously consider these things, and not be like the foolish people of the old world, who would not take warning, when Noah told them, that the Lord was about to bring a flood of waters upon the earth; or like the people of Sodom, who would not regard, when Lot told them, that God would destroy that city, and would not flee from the wrath to come, and so were consumed in that terrible destruction.

And now I would conclude my whole discourse on this subject, in words like those in the last of the Revelation: "These sayings are faithful and true, and blessed is he that keepeth these sayings. Behold, Christ cometh quickly, and his reward is with him, to render to every man according as his work shall be. And he that is unjust, shall be unjust still; and he that is filthy, shall be filthy still; and he that is holy, shall be holy still. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city: for without, are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie. He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen even so come, Lord Jesus."

THE

DISTINGUISHING MARKS

OF A

WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

MR COOPER'S PREFACE TO THE READER.

THERE are several *dispensations*, or days of grace, which the church of God has been under from the beginning of time. There is that under the ancient patriarchs; that under the law of Moses; and there is that of the gospel of Jesus Christ, under which we now are. This is the brightest day that ever shone, and exceeds the other, for peculiar advantages. To us who are so happy as to live under the evangelical dispensation, may those words of our Saviour be directed, which he spake to his disciples, when he was first setting up the Messiah's kingdom in the world, and gospel-light and power began to spread abroad: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."*

The *Mosaic* dispensation, though darkened with types and figures, yet far exceeded the former: but the gospel dispensation so much exceeds in glory, that it eclipses the glory of the legal, as the stars disappear when the sun ariseth, and goeth forth in his strength.—And the chief thing that renders the gospel so glorious is, that it is the ministration of the Spirit. Under the preaching of it, the Holy Spirit was to be poured out in more plentiful measures; not only in miraculous gifts, as in the first times of the gospel, but in his internal saving operations, accompanying the outward ministry, to produce numerous conversions to Christ, and give spiritual life to souls that were before dead in trespasses and sins, and so prepare them for eternal life. Thus the apostle speaks, when he runs a comparison between the Old Testament and the New, the law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus Christ: "For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?"†

This blessed time of the *gospel* hath several other denominations, which may raise our esteem and value for it. It is called by the evangelical prophet, "The acceptable year of the Lord."‡ Or, as it may be read, *the year of liking*, or of benevolence, or of the good will of the Lord; because it would be the special period in which he would display his grace and favor, in an extraordinary manner, and deal out spiritual blessings with a full and liberal hand.——It is also styled by our Saviour, the regeneration,§ which may refer not only to that glorious restitution of all things, which is looked for at the close of the Christian dispensation, but to the renewing work of grace in particular souls, carried on from the beginning to the end of it. But few were renewed and sanctified under the former dispensations, compared with the instances of the grace of God in gospel-times. Such numbers were brought into the gospel church when it was first set up, as to give occasion for that pleasing admiring question, which was indeed a prophecy of it,‖ "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Then the power of the divine Spirit so accompanied the ministry of the word, as that thousands were converted under one sermon.——But notwithstanding this large effusion of the Spirit, when gospel-light first dawned upon the world—that pleasant spring of religion which then appeared on the face of the earth—there was a gradual withdrawing of his saving light and influences; and so the gospel came to be less successful, and the state of Christianity withered in one place and another.

Indeed at the time of the *Reformation* from popery, when gospel-light broke in

* Luke x. 23, 24. † 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7 8 ‡ Isa. lxi. 2. § Matt. xix. 28. ‖ Isa. lx. 8

upon the church, and dispelled the clouds of antichristian darkness that covered it, the power of divine grace so accompanied the preaching of the word, as that it had admirable success in the conversion and edification of souls; and the blessed fruits thereof appeared in the hearts and lives of its professors. That was one of "the days of the Son of man," on which the exalted Redeemer rode forth, in his glory and majesty, on the white horse of the pure gospel, "conquering and to conquer;" and the bow in his right hand, like that of Jonathan, returned not empty. But what a dead and barren time has it now been, for a great while, with all the churches of the Reformation? The golden showers have been restrained; the influences of the Spirit suspended and the consequence has been, that the gospel has not had any eminent success Conversions have been rare and dubious; few sons and daughters have been born to God; and the hearts of Christians not so quickened, warmed, and refreshed under the ordinances, as they have been.

That this has been the sad state of religion among us in this land, for many years (except one or two distinguished places, which have at times been visited with a shower of mercy, while other towns and churches have not been rained upon), will be acknowledged by all who have spiritual senses exercised, as it has been lamented by faithful ministers and serious Christians. Accordingly it has been a constant petition in our public prayers, from Sabbath to Sabbath, "That God would pour out his Spirit upon us, and revive his work in the midst of the years." And besides our annual fast-days appointed by government, most of the churches have set apart days, wherein to seek the Lord by prayer and fasting, that he would "come and rain down righteousness upon us."

And *now*,——"Behold! the Lord whom we have sought, has suddenly come to his temple." The dispensation or grace we are now under, is certainly such as neither we nor our fathers have seen; and in some circumstances so wonderful, that I believe there has not been the like since the extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit immediately after our Lord's ascension. The apostolical times seem to have returned upon us: such a display has there been of the power and grace of the divine Spirit in the assemblies of his people, and such testimonies has he given to the word of the gospel.

I remember a remarkable passage of the late reverend and learned Mr. Howe, which I think it may be worth while to transcribe here. It is in his discourse concerning the "Prosperous State of the Christian Church before the End of Time, by a plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit," page 80. "In such a time," says he, "when the Spirit shall be poured forth plentifully, surely ministers shall have their proportionable share. And when such a time as that shall come, I believe you will hear much other kind of sermons (or they will who shall live to such a time) than you are wont to do now-a-days: souls will surely be dealt with at another rate. It is plain (says he), too sadly plain, there is a great retraction of the Spirit of God even from us. We know not how to speak living sense into souls; how to get within you: our words die in our mouths, or drop and die between you and us. We even faint when we speak; long-experienced unsuccessfulness makes us despond: we speak not as persons that hope to prevail, that expect to make you serious, heavenly, mindful of God, and to walk more like Christians. The methods of alluring and convincing souls, even that some of us have known, are lost from amongst us in a great part. There have been other ways taken, than we can tell now how to fall upon, for the mollifying of the obdurate, and the awakening of the secure, and the convincing and persuading of the obstinate, and the winning of the disaffected. Surely there will be a large share, that will come even to the part of ministers, when such an effusion of the Spirit shall be, as it is expected: that they shall know how to speak to better purpose, with more compassion, with more seriousness, with more authority and allurement, than we now find we can."

Agreeable to the just expectation of this great and excellent man, we have found it in this remarkable day. A number of *preachers* have appeared among us, to whom God has given such a large measure of his Spirit, that we are ready sometimes to apply to them the character given of Barnabas, that "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith."* They preach the gospel of the grace of God from place to place, with uncommon zeal and assiduity. The doctrines they insist on, are the doctrines of the reformation, under the influence whereof the power of godliness so flourished in the last century. The points on which their preaching mainly turns are those important ones of man's guilt, corruption, and impotence; supernatural re-

* Acts xi. 24

generation by the Spirit of God, and free justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; and the marks of the new birth.—The manner of their preaching is not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; howbeit, they speak wisdom among them that are perfect. An ardent love to Christ and souls, warms their breasts, and animates their labors. God has made those his ministers active spirits, a flame of fire in his service; and his word in their mouths has been, "as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." In most places where they have labored, God has evidently wrought with them, and "confirmed the word by signs following." Such a power and presence of God in religious assemblies, has not been known since God set up his sanctuary amongst us. He has indeed "glorified the house of his glory."

This work is truly extraordinary, in respect of its *extent*. It is more or less in the several provinces that measure many hundred miles on this continent. "He sendeth forth his commandment on earth! his word runneth very swiftly." It has entered and spread in some of the most populous towns, the chief places of concourse and business. And—blessed be God!—it has visited the seats of learning, both here, and in a neighboring colony. O may the Holy Spirit constantly reside in them both, seize our devoted youth, and form them as polished shafts, successfully to fight the Lord's battles against the powers of darkness, when they shall be called out to service!—It is extraordinary also with respect to the *numbers* that have been the subjects of this operation. Stupid sinners have been awakened by hundreds; and the inquiry has been general in some places. "What must I do to be saved?" I verily believe, that in this our metropolis, there were the last winter some thousands under such religious impressions as they never felt before.

The work has been remarkable also for the *various sorts* of persons that have been under its influence.—These have been of *all ages*. Some *elderly* persons have been snatched as brands out of the burning, made monuments of divine mercy, and born to God, though out of due time; as the apostle speaks in his own case.* But here, with us, it has lain mostly among the young. Sprightly youth have been made to bow like willows to the Redeemer's sceptre, and willingly to subscribe with their own hands to the Lord. And out of the mouths of babes, some little children, has God ordained to himself praise, to still the enemy and the avenger.—They have also been of all *ranks* and *degrees*. Some of the great and rich; but more of the low and poor.—Of other countries and nations. Ethiopia has stretched out her hand: some poor *negroes* have, I trust, been brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—Of all *qualities* and *conditions*. The most *ignorant*; the foolish things of the world, babes in knowledge, have been made wise unto salvation, and taught those heavenly truths, which have been hid from the wise and prudent. Some of the *learned* and knowing among men have had those things revealed to them of the Father in heaven, which flesh and blood do not teach: and of these, some who had gone into the modern notions, and had no other than the polite religion of the present times, have had their prejudices conquered, their carnal reasonings overcome, and their understandings made to bow to gospel mysteries; they now receive the truth as it is in Jesus, and their faith no longer "stands in the wisdom of man but in the power of God." Some of the most *rude* and disorderly are become regular in their behavior, and sober in all things. The *gay* and airy are become grave and serious.

Some of the *greatest sinners* have appeared to be turned into real saints: drunkards have become temperate; fornicators and adulterers of a chaste conversation; swearers and profane persons have learned to fear that glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THEIR GOD; and carnal worldlings have been made to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Yea, deriders and scoffers at this work and its instruments, have come under its conquering power. Some of this stamp, who have gone to hear the preacher (as some did Paul—"What will this babbler say?"), have not been able to resist the power and the Spirit with which he spake; have sat trembling under the word, and gone away from it weeping; and afterward did cleave unto the preacher, as Dionysius the Areopagite did unto Paul.† Divers instances of this kind have fallen under my knowledge.

The *virtuous* and civil have been convinced that morality is not to be relied on for life; and so excited to seek after the new birth, and a vital union to Jesus Christ by faith. The *formal* professor likewise has been awakened out of his dead formalities, brought under the power of godliness; taken off from his false rest, and brought to build his hope only on the Mediator's righteousness. At the same time, many of the *children of God* have been greatly quickened and refreshed; have been awakened out

* 1 Cor. xv. † Acts xvii. 18. 34.

of the sleeping frames they were fallen into, and excited to give diligence to make their calling and election sure; and have had precious, reviving, and sealing times. Thus extensive and general the divine influence has been at this glorious season.

One thing more is worthy of remark; and this is the *uniformity* of the work. By the accounts I have received in letters, and conversation with ministers and others, who live in different parts of the land where this work is going on, it is the same work that is carried on in one place and another: the method of the Spirit's operation on the minds of the people is the same; though with some variety of circumstances, as is usual at other times: and the particular appearances with which this work is attended, that have not been so common at other times, are also much the same. These are indeed objected by many against the work; but though conversion is the same work, in the main strokes of it, wherever it is wrought; yet it seems reasonable to suppose that at an extraordinary season wherein God is pleased to carry on a work of his grace in a more observable and glorious manner, in a way which he would have to be taken notice of by the world; at such a time, I say, it seems reasonable to suppose, that there may be some particular appearances in the work of conversion, which are not common at other times—when yet there are true conversions wrought—or some circumstances attending the work may be carried to an unusual degree and height. If it were not thus, the work of the Lord would not be so much regarded and spoken of; and so God would not have so much of the glory of it. Nor would the work itself be like to spread so fast; for God has evidently made use of example and discourse in the carrying of it on.

And as to the *fruits* of this work (which we have been bid so often to wait for), blessed be God! so far as there has been time for observation, they appear to be abiding. I do not mean that none have lost their impressions, or that there are no instances of hypocrisy and apostasy. Scripture and experience lead us to expect these, at such a season. It is to me matter of surprise and thankfulness that as yet there have been no more. But I mean, that a great number of those who have been awakened are still seeking and striving to enter in at the strait gate. The most of those who have been thought to be converted, continue to give evidence of their being new creatures, and seem to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. To be sure, a new face of things continues in this town: though many circumstances concur to render such a work not so observable here,* as in smaller and distant places. Many things not becoming the profession of the gospel are in a measure reformed. Taverns, dancing-schools, and such meetings as have been called assemblies, which have always proved unfriendly to serious godliness, are much less frequented. Many have reduced their dress and apparel, so as to make them look more like the followers of the humble Jesus. And it has been both surprising and pleasant to see how some younger people, and of that sex too which is most fond of such vanities, have put off the "bravery of their ornaments," as the effect and indication of their seeking the inward glories of "the King's daughter." Religion is now much more the subject of conversation at friends' houses, than ever I knew it. The doctrines of grace are espoused and relished. Private religious meetings are greatly multiplied.—The public assemblies (especially lectures) are much better attended; and our auditors were never so attentive and serious. There is indeed an extraordinary appetite after "the sincere milk of the word"

It is more than a twelvemonth since an evening lecture was set up in this town: there are now several: two constantly on Tuesday and Friday evenings; when some of our most capacious houses are well filled with hearers, who by their looks and deportment seem to come to hear that their souls might live. An evening in God's courts is now esteemed better than many elsewhere. There is also great resort to ministers in private. Our hands continue full of work: and many times we have more than we can discourse with distinctly and separately.—I have been thus large and particular, that persons at a distance, who are desirous to know the present state of religion here, into whose hands these papers will come, may receive some satisfaction.

And now, can any be at a loss to *what spirit* to ascribe this work? To attribute it, as some do, to the devil, is to make the old serpent like the foolish woman, "who plucked down her house with her hands."† Our Saviour has taught us to argue otherwise in such a case as this. "Every kingdom divided against itself, shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how then shall his kingdom stand?"‡

That some entertain *prejudices* against this work, and others revile and reproach

* *i. e.* Boston, in New England. † Prov. xiv. 1. ‡ Matt xii. 25. 26

it, does not make it look less like a work of God: it would else want one mark of its being so; for the spirit of this world, and the spirit which is of God, are contrary the one to the other. I do not wonder that Satan rages, and shows his rage in some that are under his influence, when his kingdom is so shaken, and his subjects desert him by hundreds, I hope by thousands.—The prejudices of some, I make no doubt, are owing to the want of opportunity to be rightly informed, and their having received misrepresentations from abroad. Others may be offended, because they have not experienced any thing like such a work in themselves; and if these things be so, they must begin again, and get another foundation laid than that on which they have built; and this is what men are hardly brought to. And others, perhaps, may dislike the present work, because it supports and confirms some principles which they have not yet embraced, and against which such prejudices hang about their minds, as they cannot easily shake off. For it is certain, these fruits do not grow on Arminian ground. I hope none dislike the work, because they have not been used as instruments in it. For if we love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, we shall rejoice to see him increase, though we should decrease. If any are resolutely set to disbelieve this work, to reproach and oppose it, they must be left to the free sovereign power and mercy of God to enlighten and rescue them. These, if they have had opportunity to be rightly informed, I am ready to think, would have been disbelievers, and opposers of the miracles and mission of our Saviour, had they lived in his days. The malignity which some of them have discovered, to me approaches nearer to the unpardonable sin; and they had need beware, lest they indeed sin the sin which is unto death: for as I believe it can be committed in these days, as well as in the days of the apostles, so I think persons are now in more danger of committing it than at other times. At least, let them come under the awe of that word, Psal. xxviii. 5, "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up."

But if any are disposed to receive conviction, have a mind open to light, and are really willing to know of the present work whether it be of God, it is with great satisfaction and pleasure I can recommend to them the following sheets; in which they will find the "distinguishing marks" of such a work, as they are to be found in the Holy Scriptures, applied to the uncommon operation that has been on the minds of many in this land. Here the matter is tried by the infallible touchstone of the Holy Scriptures, and is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, with great judgment and impartiality.

A performance of this kind is seasonable and necessary; and I desire heartily to bless God, who inclined this his servant to undertake it, and has graciously assisted him in it. The Reverend Author is known to be "a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven;" the place where he has been called to exercise his ministry has been famous for experimental religion; and he has had opportunities to observe this work in many places where it has powerfully appeared, and to converse with numbers that have been the subjects of it. These things qualify him for this undertaking above most. His arguments in favor of the work, are strongly drawn from Scripture, reason, and experience: and I shall believe every candid, judicious reader will say, he writes very free from an enthusiastic or a party spirit. The use of human learning is asserted; a methodical way of preaching, the fruit of study as well as prayer, is recommended; and the exercise of charity in judging others pressed and urged: and those things which are esteemed the blemishes, and are like to be the hinderances of the work, are with great faithfulness cautioned and warned against.—Many, I believe, will be thankful for this publication. Those who have already entertained favorable thoughts of this work, will be confirmed by it; and the doubting may be convinced and satisfied. But if there are any who cannot after all see the signatures of a divine hand on the work, it is to be hoped they will be prevailed on to spare their censures, and stop their oppositions, lest "haply they should be found even to fight against God."

I had yet several things to say, which I see I must suppress, or I shall go much beyond the limits of a preface: and I fear I need to ask pardon both of the reader and the publishers for the length I have run already. Only I cannot help expressing my wish, that those who have been conversant in this work, in one place and another, would transmit accounts of it to such a hand as the Reverend Author of this discourse, to be compiled into a narrative, like that of the conversions at Northampton, which was published a few years ago; that so the world may know this surprising dispensation, in the beginning, progress, and various circumstances of it. This, I apprehend, would be for the honor of the Holy Spirit, whose work and office has been treated so

reproachfully in the Christian world. It would be an open attestation to the divinity of a despised gospel: and it might have a happy effect on the other places, where the sound of this marvellous work would by this means be heard. I cannot but think it would be one of the most useful pieces of church history the people of God are blessed with. Perhaps it would come the nearest to the Acts of the Apostles of any thing extant; and all the histories in the world do not come up to that: there we have something as surprising as in the book of Genesis; and a new creation, of another kind, seems to open to our view. But I must forbear.

I will only add my prayer, That the worthy Author of this discourse may long be continued a burning and shining light in the golden candlestick where Christ has placed him, and from thence diffuse his light through these provinces! That the divine Spirit, whose cause is here espoused, would accompany this and the other valuable publications of his servant, with his powerful influences; that they may promote the Redeemer's interest, serve the ends of vital religion, and so add to the Author's present joy, and future crown!

W. COOPER.

Boston, Nov. 20, 1741.

THE

MARKS OF A WORK OF THE TRUE SPIRIT.

1 JOHN iv. 1.—Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

IN the apostolic age, there was the greatest outpouring of the Spirit of God that ever was; both as to his extraordinary influences and gifts, and his ordinary operations, in convincing, converting, enlightening, and sanctifying the souls of men. But as the influences of the true Spirit abounded, so counterfeits did also abound: the devil was abundant in mimicking, both the ordinary and extraordinary influences of the Spirit of God, as is manifest by innumerable passages of the apostles' writings. This made it very necessary that the church of Christ should be furnished with some certain rules, distinguishing and clear marks, by which she might proceed safely in judging of the true from the false without danger of being imposed upon. The giving of such rules is the plain design of this chapter, where we have this matter more expressly and fully treated of than anywhere else in the Bible. The apostle, of set purpose, undertakes to supply the church of God with such marks of the true Spirit as may be plain and safe, and well accommodated to use and practice; and that the subject might be clearly and sufficiently handled, he insists upon it throughout the chapter, which makes it wonderful that what is here said is no more taken notice of in this extraordinary day, when there is such an uncommon and extensive operation on the minds of people, such a variety of opinions concerning it, and so much talk about the work of the Spirit.

The apostle's discourse on this subject is introduced by an occasional mention of the indwelling of the Spirit, as the sure evidence of an interest in Christ: "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." Whence we may infer, that the design of the apostle is not only to give marks whereby to distinguish the true Spirit from the false, in his extraordinary gifts of prophecy and miracles, but also in his ordinary influences on the minds of his people, in order to their union to Christ, and being built up in him; which is also manifest from the marks themselves that are given, which we shall hereafter notice.

The words of the text are an introduction to this discourse of the distinguishing signs of the true and false Spirit.—Before the apostle proceeds to lay down the signs, he exhorteth Christians, first, against an over credulousness, and a forwardness to admit every specious appearance as the work of a true Spirit: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." And, second, he shows, that there were many counterfeits, "because many false prophets were gone out into the world." These did not only pretend to have the Spirit of God in his extraordinary gifts of inspiration, but also to be the great friends and favorites of heaven to be eminently holy persons, and to have much of the ordinary saving, sanctifying influences of the Spirit

of God on their hearts. Hence we are to look upon these words as a direction to examine and try their pretences to the Spirit of God, in both these respects.

My design therefore at this time is to show what are the true, certain, and distinguishing evidences of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may safely proceed in judging of any operation we find in ourselves, or see in others. And here I would observe, that we are to take the *Scriptures* as our guide in such cases. This is the great and standing rule which God has given to his church, in order to guide them in things relating to the great concerns of their souls; and it is an infallible and sufficient rule. There are undoubtedly sufficient marks given to guide the church of God in this great affair of judging of spirits, without which it would lie open to woful delusion, and would be remedilessly exposed to be imposed on and devoured by its enemies. And we need not be afraid to trust these rules. Doubtless that Spirit who indited the Scriptures knew how to give us good rules, by which to distinguish his operations from all that is falsely pretended to be from him. And this, as I observed before, the Spirit of God has here done of set purpose, and done it more particularly and fully than any where else: so that in my present discourse I shall go nowhere else for rules or marks for the trial of spirits, but shall confine myself to those that I find in this chapter.—But before I proceed particularly to speak to these, I would prepare my way by, FIRST, observing *negatively*, in some instances, what are *not signs* or evidences of a work of the Spirit of God.

SECTION I.

NEGATIVE SIGNS; or, What are no signs by which we are to judge of a work—and especially, What are no evidences that a work is not from the Spirit of God.

I. Nothing can be certainly concluded from this, That a work is carried on in a way very unusual and extraordinary; provided the variety or difference be such, as may still be comprehended within the limits of Scripture rules. What the church has been used to, is not a rule by which we are to judge; because there may be new and extraordinary works of God, and he has heretofore evidently wrought in an extraordinary manner. He has brought to pass new things, strange works; and has wrought in such a manner as to surprise both men and angels. And as God has done thus in times past, so we have no reason to think but that he will do so still. The prophecies of Scripture give us reason to think that God has things to accomplish, which have never yet been seen. No deviation from what has hitherto been usual, let it be never so great, is an argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, if it be no deviation from his prescribed rule. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in his operation; and we know that he uses a great variety; and we cannot tell how great a variety he may use, within the compass of the rules he himself has fixed We ought not to limit God where he has not limited himself.

Therefore it is not reasonable to determine that a work is not from God's Holy Spirit because of the extraordinary degree in which the minds of persons are influenced. If they seem to have an extraordinary conviction of the dreadful nature of sin, and a very uncommon sense of the misery of a Christless condition—or extraordinary views of the certainty and glory of divine things—and are proportionably moved with very extraordinary affections of fear and

sorrow, desire, love, or joy: or if the apparent change be very sudden, and the work be carried on with very unusual swiftness—and the persons affected are very numerous, and many of them are very young, with other unusual circumstances, not infringing upon Scripture marks of a work of the Spirit—these things are no argument that the work is not of the Spirit of God.—The extraordinary and unusual degree of influence, and power of operation, if in its nature it be agreeable to the rules and marks given in Scripture, is rather an argument in its favor; for by how much higher the degree which in its nature is agreeable to the rule, so much the more is there of conformity to the rule; and so much the more evident that conformity. When things are in small degrees, though they be really agreeable to the rule, it is not so easily seen whether their nature agrees with the rule.

There is a great aptness in persons to doubt of things that are strange; especially elderly persons, to think that to be right which they have never been used to in their day, and have not heard of in the days of their fathers. But if it be a good argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that it is very unusual, then it was so in the apostles' days. The work of the Spirit then, was carried on in a manner that, in very many respects, was altogether new; such as never had been seen or heard since the world stood. The work was then carried on with more visible and remarkable power than ever; nor had there been seen before such mighty and wonderful effects of the Spirit of God in sudden changes, and such great engagedness and zeal in great multitudes—such a sudden alteration in towns, cities, and countries; such a swift progress, and vast extent of the work—and many other extraordinary circumstances might be mentioned. The great unusualness of the work surprised the Jews; they knew not what to make of it, but could not believe it to be the work of God: many looked upon the persons that were the subjects of it as bereft of reason; as you may see in Acts ii. 13, xxvi. 24, and 1 Cor. iv. 10.

And we have reason from Scripture prophecy to suppose, that at the commencement of that last and greatest outpouring of the Spirit of God, that is to be in the latter ages of the world, the manner of the work will be very extraordinary, and such as never has yet been seen; so that there shall be occasion then to say, as in Isa. lxvi. 8, "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." It may be reasonably expected that the extraordinary manner of the work then, will bear some proportion to the very extraordinary events, and that glorious change in the state of the world, which God will bring to pass by it.

II. A work is not to be judged of by any effects on the bodies of men; such as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies of body, or the failing of bodily strength. The influence persons are under, is not to be judged of one way or other, by such effects on the body; and the reason is, because the Scripture nowhere gives us any such rule. We cannot conclude that persons are under the influence of the true Spirit because we see such effects upon their bodies, because this is not given as a mark of the true Spirit; nor on the other hand, have we any reason to conclude, from any such outward appearances, that persons are not under the influence of the Spirit of God, because there is no rule of Scripture given us to judge of spirits by, that does either expressly or indirectly exclude such effects on the body, nor does reason exclude them. It is easily accounted for from the consideration of the nature of divine and eternal things, and the nature of man, and the laws of the union between

soul and body, how a right influence, a true and proper sense of things, should have such effects on the body, even those that are of the most extraordinary kind, such as taking away the bodily strength, or throwing the body into great agonies, and extorting loud outcries. There are none of us but do suppose, and would have been ready at any time to say it, that the misery of hell is doubtless so dreadful, and eternity so vast, that if a person should have a clear apprehension of that misery as it is, it would be more than his feeble frame could bear, and especially if at the same time he saw himself in great danger of it, and to be utterly uncertain whether he should be delivered from it, yea, and to have no security from it one day or hour. If we consider human nature, we must not wonder, that when persons have a great sense of that which is so amazingly dreadful, and also have a great view of their own wickedness and God's anger, that things seem to them to forebode speedy and immediate destruction. We see the nature of man to be such that when he is in danger of some terrible calamity to which he is greatly exposed, he is ready upon every occasion to think, that *now* it is coming.—When persons' hearts are full of fear, in time of war, they are ready to tremble at the shaking of a leaf, and to expect the enemy every minute, and to say within themselves, *now* I shall be slain. If we should suppose that a person saw himself hanging over a great pit, full of fierce and glowing flames, by a thread that he knew to be very weak, and not sufficient to bear his weight, and knew that multitudes had been in such circumstances before, and that most of them had fallen and perished, and saw nothing within reach, that he could take hold of to save him, what distress would he be in! How ready to think that *now* the thread was breaking, that now, *this minute*, he should be swallowed up in those dreadful flames! And would not he be ready to cry out in such circumstances? How much more those that see themselves in this manner hanging over an infinitely more dreadful pit, or held over it in the hand of God, who at the same time they see to be exceedingly provoked! No wonder that the wrath of God, when manifested but a little to the soul, overbears human strength.

So it may easily be accounted for, that a true sense of the glorious excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his wonderful dying love, and the exercise of a truly spiritual love and joy, should be such as very much to overcome the bodily strength. We are all ready to own, that no man can see God and live, and that it is but a very small part of that apprehension of the glory and love of Christ which the saints enjoy in heaven, that our present frame can bear; therefore it is not at all strange that God should sometimes give his saints such foretastes of heaven, as to diminish their bodily strength. If it was not unaccountable that the queen of Sheba fainted, and had her bodily strength taken away, when she came to see the glory of Solomon, much less is it unaccountable that she who is the antitype of the queen of Sheba, viz., the Church, that is brought, as it were, from the utmost ends of the earth, from being an alien and stranger, far off, in a state of sin and misery, should faint when she comes to see the glory of Christ, who is the antitype of Solomon; and especially will be so in that prosperous, peaceful, glorious kingdom, which he will set up in the world in its latter age.

Some object against such extraordinary appearances, that we have no instances of them recorded in the New Testament, under the extraordinary effusions of the spirit. Were this allowed, I can see no force in the objection, if neither reason, nor any rule of Scripture, exclude such things; especially considering what was observed under the foregoing particular. I do not know that we have any express mention in the New Testament of any person's

weeping, or groaning, or sighing through fear of hell, or a sense of God's anger; but is there any body so foolish as from hence to argue, that in whomsoever these things appear, their convictions are not from the Spirit of God? And the reason why we do not argue thus, is, because these are easily accounted for, from what we know of the nature of man, and from what the Scripture informs us in general, concerning the nature of eternal things, and the nature of the convictions of God's Spirit; so that there is no need that any thing should be said in particular concerning these external, circumstantial effects. Nobody supposes that there is any need of express scripture for every external, accidental manifestation of the inward motion of the mind: and though such circumstances are not particularly recorded in sacred history, yet there is a great deal of reason to think, from the general accounts we have, that it could not be otherwise than that such things must be in those days. And there is also reason to think, that such great outpouring of the Spirit was not wholly without those more extraordinary effects on persons' bodies. The jailer in particular, seems to have been an instance of that nature, when he, in the utmost distress and amazement, came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. His falling down at that time does not seem to be a designed putting himself into a posture of supplication, or humble address to Paul and Silas; for he seems not to have said any thing to them then; but he first brought them out, and then he says to them, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Acts xvi. 29, and 30. But his falling down seems to be from the same cause as his trembling. The Psalmist gives an account of his crying out aloud, and a great weakening of his body under convictions of conscience, and a sense of the guilt of sin, Psal xxxii. 3, 4: "When I kept silence my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long; for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer."—We may at least argue so much from it, that such an effect of conviction of sin may well in some cases be supposed; for if we should suppose any thing of an *auxesis* in the expressions, yet the Psalmist would not represent his case by what would be absurd, and to which no degree of that exercise of mind he spoke of, would have any tendency. —We read of the disciples, Matt. xiv. 26, that when they saw Christ coming to them in the storm, and took him for some terrible enemy, threatening their destruction in that storm, "they cried out for fear." Why then should it be thought strange, that persons should cry out for fear, when God appears to them, as a terrible enemy, and they see themselves in great danger of being swallowed up in the bottomless gulf of eternal misery? The spouse, once and again, speaks of herself as overpowered with the love of Christ, so as to weaken her body, and make her faint. Cant. ii. 5, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love." And chap. v. 8, "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my Beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love." From whence we may at least argue, that such an effect may well be supposed to arise from such a cause in the saints, in some cases, and that such an effect will sometimes be seen in the church of Christ.

It is a weak objection, that the impressions of enthusiasts have a great effect on their bodies. That the Quakers used to tremble, is no argument that Saul, afterwards Paul, and the jailer, did not tremble from real convictions of conscience. Indeed all such objections from effects on the body, let them be greater or less, seem to be exceeding frivolous; they who argue thence, proceed in the dark, they know not what ground they go upon, nor by what rule they judge. The root and course of things is to be looked at, and the nature of

the operations and affections are to be inquired into, and examined by the rule of God's word, and not the motions of the blood and animal spirits.

III. It is no argument that an operation on the minds of people is not the work of the Spirit of God, that it occasions a great deal of noise about religion. For though true religion be of a contrary nature to that of the Pharisees—which was ostentatious, and delighted to set itself forth to the view of men for their applause—yet such is human nature, that it is morally impossible there should be a great concern, strong affection, and a general engagedness of mind amongst a people without causing a notable, visible, and open commotion and alteration amongst that people.—Surely, it is no argument that the minds of persons are not under the influence of God's Spirit, that they are very much moved: for indeed spiritual and eternal things are so great, and of such infinite concern, that there is a great absurdity in men's being but moderately moved and affected by them; and surely it is no argument that they are not moved by the Spirit of God, that they are affected with these things in some measure as they deserve, or in some proportion to their importance. And when was there ever any such thing since the world stood, as a people in general being greatly affected in any affair whatsoever, without noise or stir? The nature of man will not allow it.

Indeed Christ says, Luke xvii. 20, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." That is, it will not consist in what is outward and visible; it shall not be like earthly kingdoms, set up with outward pomp, in some particular place, which shall be especially the royal city, and seat of the kingdom; as Christ explains himself in the words next following, "Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there; for behold the kingdom of God is within you." Not that the kingdom of God shall be set up in the world, on the ruin of Satan's kingdom, without a very observable, great effect: a mighty change in the state of things, to the observation and astonishment of the whole world: for such an effect as this is even held forth in the prophecies of Scripture, and is so by Christ himself, in this very place, and even in his own explanation of these forementioned words, ver. 24: "For as the lightning that lightneth out of one part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in his day." This is to distinguish Christ's coming to set up his kingdom, from the coming of false Christs, which he tells us will be in a private manner in the deserts, and in the secret chambers; whereas this event of setting up the kingdom of God, should be open and public, in the sight of the whole world with clear manifestation, like lightning that cannot be hid, but glares in every one's eyes, and shines from one side of heaven to the other. And we find, that when Christ's kingdom came, by that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit in the apostles' days, it occasioned a great stir everywhere. What a mighty opposition was there in Jerusalem, on occasion of that great effusion of the Spirit! And so in Samaria, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and other places! The affair filled the world with noise, and gave occasion to some to say of the apostles, that they had turned the world upside down, Acts xvii. 6.

IV. It is no argument that an operation on the minds of a people, is not the work of the Spirit of God, that many who are the subjects of it, have great impressions made on their imaginations. That persons have many impressions on their imaginations, does not prove that they have nothing else. It is easy to be accounted for, that there should be much of this nature amongst a people, where a great multitude of all kinds of constitutions have their minds engaged with intense thought and strong affections about invisible things; yea, it would be strange if there should not. Such is our nature, that we cannot think of

things invisible, without a degree of imagination. I dare appeal to any man, of the greatest powers of mind, whether he is able to fix his thoughts on God or Christ, or the things of another world, without imaginary ideas attending his meditations? And the more engaged the mind is, and the more intense the contemplation and affection, still the more lively and strong the imaginary idea will ordinarily be; especially when attended with surprise. And this is the case when the mental prospect is very new, and takes strong hold of the passions, as fear or joy; and when the change of the state and views of the mind is sudden, from a contrary extreme, as from that which was extremely dreadful, to that which is extremely ravishing and delightful. And it is no wonder that many persons do not well distinguish between that which is imaginary and that which is intellectual and spiritual; and that they are apt to lay too much weight on the imaginary part, and are most ready to speak of that in the account they give of their experiences, especially persons of less understanding and of distinguishing capacity.

As God has given us such a faculty as the imagination, and so made us that we cannot think of things spiritual and invisible, without some exercise of this faculty; so, it appears to me, that such is our state and nature, that this faculty is really subservient and helpful to the other faculties of the mind, when a proper use is made of it; though oftentimes, when the imagination is too strong, and the other faculties weak, it overbears, and disturbs them in their exercise. It appears to me manifest, in many instances with which I have been acquainted, that God has really made use of this faculty to truly divine purposes; especially in some that are more ignorant. God seems to condescend to their circumstances, and deal with them as babes; as of old he instructed his church, whilst in a state of ignorance and minority, by types and outward representations. I can see nothing unreasonable in such a position. Let others who have much occasion to deal with souls in spiritual concerns, judge whether experience does not confirm it.

It is no argument that a work is not of the Spirit of God, that some who are the subjects of it have been in a kind of ecstasy, wherein they have been carried beyond themselves, and have had their minds transported into a train of strong and pleasing imaginations, and a kind of visions, as though they were rapt up even to heaven, and there saw glorious sights. I have been acquainted with some such instances, and I see no need of bringing in the help of the devil into the account that we give of these things, nor yet of supposing them to be of the same nature with the visions of the prophets, or St. Paul's rapture into paradise. Human nature, under these intense exercises and affections, is all that need be brought into the account. If it may be well accounted for, that persons under a true sense of a glorious and wonderful greatness and excellency of divine things, and soul-ravishing views of the beauty and love of Christ, should have the strength of nature overpowered, as I have already shown that it may; then I think it is not at all strange, that amongst great numbers that are thus affected and overborne, there should be some persons of particular constitutions that should have their imaginations thus affected. The effect is no other than what bears a proportion and analogy to other effects of the strong exercise of their minds. It is no wonder, when the thoughts are so fixed, and the affections so strong—and the whole soul so engaged, ravished, and swallowed up—that all other parts of the body are so affected, as to be deprived of their strength, and the whole frame ready to dissolve. Is it any wonder that, in such a case, the brain in particular (especially in some constitutions), which we know is most especially affected

by intense contemplations and exercises of mind, should be so affected, that its strength and spirits should for a season be diverted, and taken off from impressions made on the organs of external sense, and be wholly employed in a train of pleasing delightful imaginations, corresponding with the present frame of the mind? Some are ready to interpret such things wrong, and to lay too much weight on them, as prophetical visions, divine revelations, and sometimes significations from heaven of what shall come to pass; which the issue, in some instances I have known, has shown to be otherwise. But yet, it appears to me that such things are evidently sometimes from the Spirit of God, though indirectly; that is, their extraordinary frame of mind, and that strong and lively sense of divine things which is the occasion of them, is from his Spirit; and also as the mind continues in its holy frame, and retains a divine sense of the excellency of spiritual things even in its rapture; which holy frame and sense is from the Spirit of God, though the imaginations that attend it are but accidental, and therefore there is commonly something or other in them that is confused, improper, and false.

V. It is no sign that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that example is a great means of it. It is surely no argument that an effect is not from God, that means are used in producing it; for we know that it is God's manner to make use of means in carrying on his work in the world, and it is no more an argument against the divinity of an effect, that this means is made use of, than if it was by any other means. It is agreeable to Scripture that persons should be influenced by one another's good example. The Scripture directs us to set good examples to that end, Matt. v. 16, 1 Pet. iii. 1, 1 Tim iv. 12, Titus ii. 7; and also directs us to be influenced by the good examples of others, and to follow them, 2 Cor. viii. 1—7, Heb. vi. 12, Phil. iii. 17, 1 Cor. iv. 16, and chap. xi. 1, 2 Thess. iii. 9, 1 Thess. i. 7. By which it appears, that example is one of God's means; and certainly it is no argument that a work is not of God, that his own means are made use of to effect it.

And as it is a *Scriptural* way of carrying on God's work, by example, so it is a *reasonable* way. It is no argument that men are not influenced by reason, that they are influenced by example. This way of persons holding forth truth to one another, has a tendency to enlighten the mind, and to convince reason. None will deny but that for persons to signify things one to another by words, may rationally be supposed to tend to enlighten each other's minds. But the same thing may be signified by actions, and signified much more fully and effectually. Words are of no use any otherwise than as they convey our own ideas to others; but actions, in some cases, may do it much more fully. There is a language in actions; and in some cases, much more clear and convincing than in words. It is therefore no argument against the goodness of the effect, that persons are greatly affected by seeing others so; yea, though the impression be made only by seeing the tokens of great and extraordinary affection in others in their behavior, taking for granted what they are affected with, without hearing them say one word. There may be language sufficient in such a case in their behavior only, to convey their minds to others, and to signify to them their sense of things more than can possibly be done by words only. If a person should see another under extreme bodily torment, he might receive much clearer ideas, and more convincing evidence of what he suffered by his actions in his misery, than he could do only by the words of an unaffected indifferent relater. In like manner he might receive a greater idea of any thing that is excellent and very delightful, from the behavior of one that is in actual enjoyment, than by the dull narration

of one which is inexperienced and insensible himself. I desire that this matter may be examined by the strictest reason.—Is it not manifest, that effects produced in persons' minds are rational, since not only weak and ignorant people are much influenced by example, but also those that make the greatest boast of strength of reason, are more influenced by reason held forth in this way, than almost any other way. Indeed the religious affections of many when raised by this means, as by hearing the word preached, or any other means, may prove flashy, and soon vanish, as Christ represents the stony-ground hearers; but the affections of some thus moved by example, are abiding, and prove to be of saving issue.

There never yet was a time of remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, and great revival of religion, but that example had a main hand. So it was at the Reformation, and in the apostles' days, in Jerusalem and Samaria, and Ephesus, and other parts of the world, as will be most manifest to any one that attends to the accounts we have in the Acts of the Apostles. As in those days one person was moved by another, so one city or town was influenced by the example of another: 1 Thess. i. 7, 8, "So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, for from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad."

It is no valid objection against examples being so much used, that the Scripture speaks of the word as the principal means of carrying on God's work; for the word of God is the principal means, nevertheless, by which other means operate and are made effectual. Even the sacraments have no effect but by the word; and so it is that example becomes effectual; for all that is visible to the eye is unintelligible and vain, without the word of God to instruct and guide the mind. It is the word of God that is indeed held forth and applied by example, as the word of the Lord sounded forth to other towns in Macedonia, and Achaia, by the example of those that believe in Thessalonica.

That example should be a great means of propagating the church of God seems to be several ways signified in Scripture: it is signified by Ruth's following Naomi out of the land of Moab, into the land of Israel, when she resolved that she would not leave her, but would go whither she went, and would lodge where she lodged; and that Naomi's people should be her people, and Naomi's God, her God. Ruth, who was the ancestral mother of David, and of Christ, was undoubtedly a great type of the church; upon which account her history is inserted in the canon of Scripture. In her leaving the land of Moab and its gods, to come and put her trust under the shadow of the wings of the God of Israel, we have a type of the conversion not only of the Gentile church but of every sinner, that is naturally an alien and stranger, but in his conversion forgets his own people, and father's house, and becomes a fellow-citizen with the saints and a true Israelite. The same seems to be signified in the effect the example of the spouse, when she was sick of love, has on the daughters of Jerusalem, i. e., visible Christians, who are first awakened, by seeing the spouse in such extraordinary circumstances, and then converted. See Cant. v. 8, 9, and vi. 1. And this is undoubtedly one way that "the Spirit and the bride say, come," Rev. xxii. 17; i. e., the Spirit in the bride. It is foretold, that the work of God should be very much carried on by this means, in the last great outpouring of the Spirit, that should introduce the glorious day of the church, so often spoken of in Scripture, Zech viii. 21—23: "And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I

will go also. Yea, many people, and strong nations, shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

VI. It is no sign that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that many, who seem to be the subjects of it, are guilty of great imprudences and irregularities in their conduct. We are to consider that the end for which God pours out his Spirit, is to make men holy, and not to make them politicians. It is no wonder that, in a mixed multitude of all sorts—wise and unwise, young and old, of weak and strong natural abilities, under strong impressions of mind—there are many who behave themselves imprudently. There are but few that know how to conduct themselves under vehement affections of any kind, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature; to do so requires a great deal of discretion, strength, and steadiness of mind. A thousand imprudences will not prove a work to be not of the Spirit of God; yea, if there be not only imprudences, but many things prevailing that are irregular, and really contrary to the rules of God's holy word. That it should be thus may be well accounted for from the exceeding weakness of human nature, together with the remaining darkness and corruption of those that are yet the subjects of the saving influences of God's Spirit, and have a real zeal for God.

We have a remarkable instance, in the New Testament, of a people that partook largely of that great effusion of the Spirit in the apostles' days, among whom there nevertheless abounded imprudences and great irregularities; viz., the church at Corinth. There is scarcely any church more celebrated in the New Testament for being blessed with large measures of the Spirit of God, both in his ordinary influences, in convincing and converting sinners, and also in his extraordinary and miraculous gifts; yet what manifold imprudences, great and sinful irregularities, and strange confusion did they run into, at the Lord's supper, and in the exercise of church discipline! To which may be added, their indecent manner of attending other parts of public worship, their jarring and contention about their teachers, and even the exercise of their extraordinary gifts of prophecy, speaking with tongues, and the like, wherein they spake and acted by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God.

And if we see great imprudences, and even sinful irregularities, in some who are great instruments to carry on the work, it will not prove it not to be the work of God. The apostle Peter himself, who was a great, eminently holy, and inspired apostle—and one of the chief instruments of setting up the Christian church in the world—when he was actually engaged in this work, was guilty of a great and sinful error in his conduct; of which the apostle Paul speaks, Gal. ii. 11—13: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed; for before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision; and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch, that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." If a great pillar of the Christian church—one of the chief of those who are the very foundations on which, next to Christ, the whole church is said to be built—was guilty of such an irregularity; is it any wonder if other lesser instruments, who have not that extraordinary conduct of the divine Spirit he had, should be guilty of many irregularities?

And in particular, it is no evidence that a work is not of God, if many who are either the subjects or the instruments of it, are guilty of too great forwardness to censure others as unconverted. For this may be through mistakes they have embraced concerning the marks by which they are to judge of the hypocrisy and carnality of others; or from not duly apprehending the latitude the Spirit of God uses in the methods of his operations; or, from want of making due allowance for that infirmity and corruption that may be left in the hearts of the saints; as well as through want of a due sense of their own blindness and weakness, and remaining corruption, whereby spiritual pride may have a secret vent this way, under some disguise, and not be discovered.—If we allow that truly pious men may have a great deal of remaining blindness and corruption, and may be liable to mistakes about the marks of hypocrisy, as undoubtedly all will allow, then it is not unaccountable that they should sometimes run into such errors as these. It is as easy, and upon some accounts more easy to be accounted for, why the remaining corruption of good men should sometimes have an unobserved vent this way than most other ways; and without doubt (however lamentable) many holy men have erred in this way.

Lukewarmness in religion is abominable, and zeal an excellent grace, yet above all other Christian virtues, this needs to be strictly watched and searched; for it is that with which corruption, and particularly pride and human passion, is exceedingly apt to mix unobserved. And it is observable, that there never was a time of great reformation, to cause a revival of zeal in the church of God, but that it has been attended, in some notable instances, with irregularity, and a running out some way or other into an undue severity. Thus in the apostles' days, a great deal of zeal was spent about unclean meats, with heat of spirit in Christians one against another, both parties condemning and censuring one another, as not true Christians; when the apostle had charity for both, as influenced by a spirit of real piety: "He that eats," says he, "to the Lord he eats, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." So in the church of Corinth, they had got into a way of extolling some ministers, and censuring others, and were puffed up one against another; but yet these things were no sign that the work then so wonderfully carried on, was not the work of God. And after this, when religion was still greatly flourishing in the world, and a Spirit of eminent holiness and zeal prevailed in the Christian church, the zeal of Christians ran out into a very improper and undue severity, in the exercise of church discipline towards delinquents. In some cases they would by no means admit them into their charity and communion though they appeared never so humble and penitent. And in the days of Constantine the Great, the zeal of Christians against heathenism ran out into a degree of persecution. So in that glorious revival of religion, at the reformation, zeal in many instances appeared in a very improper severity, and even a degree of persecution; yea, in some of the most eminent reformers; as in the great Calvin in particular. And many in those days of the flourishing of vital religion, were guilty of severely censuring others that differed from them in opinion in some points of divinity.

VII. Nor are many errors in judgment, and some delusions of Satan intermixed with the work, any argument that the work in general is not of the Spirit of God. However great a spiritual influence may be, it is not to be expected that the Spirit of God should be given now in the same manner as to the apostles, infallibly to guide them in points of Christian doctrine, so that what they taught might be relied on as a rule to the Christian church. And

if many delusions of Satan appear, at the same time that a great religious concern prevails, it is not an argument that the work in general is not the work of God, any more than it was an argument in Egypt, that there were no true miracles wrought there, by the hand of God, because Jannes and Jambres wrought false miracles at the same time by the hand of the devil. Yea, the same persons may be the subjects of much of the influences of the Spirit of God, and yet in some things be led away by the delusions of Satan, and this be no more of paradox than many other things that are true of real saints, in the present state, where grace dwells with so much corruption, and the new man and the old man subsist together in the same person; and the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil remain for a while together in the same heart. Many godly persons have undoubtedly in this and other ages, exposed themselves to woful delusions, by an aptness to lay too much weight on impulses and impressions, as if they were immediate revelations from God, to signify something future, or to direct them where to go, and what to do.

VIII. If some, who were thought to be wrought upon, fall away into gross errors, or scandalous practices, it is no argument that the work in general is not the work of the Spirit of God. That there are some counterfeits, is no argument that nothing is true: such things are always expected in a time of reformation. If we look into church history, we shall find no instance of any great revival of religion, but what has been attended with many such things. Instances of this nature in the apostles' days were innumerable; some fell away into gross heresies, others into vile practices, though they seemed to be the subjects of a work of the Spirit —and were accepted for a while amongst those that were truly so, as their brethren and companions—and were not suspected till they went out from them. And some of these were teachers and officers—and eminent persons in the Christian church—whom God had endowed with miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; as appears by the beginning of the 6th chapter of the Hebrews. An instance of these was Judas, who was one of the twelve apostles, and had long been constantly united to, and intimately conversant with, a company of truly experienced disciples, without being discovered or suspected till he discovered himself by his scandalous practice. He had been treated by Jesus himself, in all external things, as if he had truly been a disciple, even investing him with the character of apostle, sending him forth to preach the gospel, and enduing him with miraculous gifts of the Spirit. For though Christ knew him, yet he did not then clothe himself with the character of omniscient Judge, and searcher of hearts, but acted the part of a minister of the visible church (for he was his Father's minister;) and therefore rejected him not, till he had discovered himself by his scandalous practice; thereby giving an example to guides and rulers of the visible church, not to take it upon them to act the part of searcher of hearts, but to be influenced in their administrations by what is visible and open. There were some instances then of such apostates, as were esteemed eminently full of the grace of God's Spirit. An instance of this nature probably was Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, who was looked upon by the Christians in Jerusalem, in the time of that extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit, as a man full of the Holy Ghost, and was chosen out of the multitudes of Christians to that office, for that reason; as you may see in Acts vi. 3, 5; yet he afterwards fell away and became the head of a sect of vile heretics, of gross practices, called from his name the sect of the Nicolaitans,* Rev. ii. 6, and 15.

So in the time of the reformation from popery, how great was the number

* But though these heretics assumed his name, it does not follow that he countenanced their enormities. See Calmet's Dict. Nicolas.

of those who for a while seemed to join with the reformers, yet fell away into the grossest and most absurd errors, and abominable practices. And it is particularly observable, that in times of great pouring out of the Spirit to revive religion in the world, a number of those who for a while seemed to partake in it, have fallen off into whimsical and extravagant errors, and gross enthusiasm, boasting of high degrees of spirituality and perfection, censuring and condemning others as carnal. Thus it was with the Gnostics in the apostles' times; and thus it was with several sects at the Reformation, as Anthony Burgess observes in his book called Spiritual Refinings, Part I. Serm. 23. p. 132: "The first worthy reformers, and glorious instruments of God, found a bitter conflict herein, so that they were exercised not only with formalists, and traditionary papists on the one side, but men that pretended themselves to be more enlightened than the reformers were, on the other side: hence they called those that did adhere to the Scripture, and would try revelations by it, Literists and Vowelists, as men acquainted with the words and vowels of the Scripture, having nothing of the Spirit of God: and wheresoever in any town, the true doctrine of the gospel brake forth to the displacing of popery, presently such opinions arose like tares that came up among the good wheat; whereby great divisions were raised, and the reformation made abominable and odious to the world; as if that had been the sun to give heat and warmth to those worms and serpents to crawl out of the ground. Hence they inveighed against Luther, and said he had only promulgated a carnal gospel."—Some of the leaders of those wild enthusiasts had been for a while highly esteemed by the first reformers, and peculiarly dear to them.—Thus also in England, at the time when vital religion much prevailed in the days of King Charles I. the interregnum, and Oliver Cromwell, such things as these abounded. And so in New England, in her purest days, when vital piety flourished, such kind of things as these broke out. Therefore the devil's sowing of such tares is no proof that a true work of the Spirit of God is not gloriously carried on.

IX. It is no argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, that it seems to be promoted by ministers insisting very much on the terrors of God's holy law, and that with a great deal of pathos and earnestness. If there be really a hell of such dreadful and never-ending torments, as is generally supposed, of which multitudes are in great danger—and into which the greater part of men in Christian countries do actually from generation to generation fall, for want of a sense of its terribleness, and so for want of taking due care to avoid it—then why is it not proper for those who have the care of souls to take great pains to make men sensible of it? Why should they not be told as much of the truth as can be? If I am in danger of going to hell, I should be glad to know as much as possibly I can of the dreadfulness of it. If I am very prone to neglect due care to avoid it, he does me the best kindness, who does most to represent to me the truth of the case, that sets forth my misery and danger in the liveliest manner.

I appeal to every one whether this is not the very course they would take in case of exposedness to any great temporal calamity? If any of you who are heads of families saw one of your children in a house all on fire, and in imminent danger of being soon consumed in the flames, yet seemed to be very insensible of its danger, and neglected to escape after you had often called to it—would you go on to speak to it only in a cold and indifferent manner? Would not you cry aloud, and call earnestly to it, and represent the danger it was in, and its own folly in delaying, in the most lively manner of which you was capable? Would not nature itself teach this, and oblige you to it? If

you should continue to speak to it only in a cold manner, as you are wont to do in ordinary conversation about indifferent matters, would not those about you begin to think you were bereft of reason yourself? This is not the way of mankind in temporal affairs of great moment, that require earnest heed and great haste, and about which they are greatly concerned. They are not wont to speak to others of their danger, and warn them but a little or in a cold and indifferent manner. Nature teaches men otherwise. If we who have the care of souls, knew what hell was, had seen the state of the damned, or by any other means had become sensible how dreadful their case was—and at the same time knew that the greater part of men went thither, and saw our hearers not sensible of their danger—it would be morally impossible for us to avoid most earnestly setting before them the dreadfulness of that misery, and their great exposedness to it and even to cry aloud to them.

When ministers preach of hell, and warn sinners to avoid it, in a cold manner—though they may say in words that it is infinitely terrible—they contradict themselves. For actions, as I observed before, have a language as well as words. If a preacher's words represent the sinner's state as infinitely dreadful, while his behavior and manner of speaking contradict it—showing that the preacher does not think so—he defeats his own purpose; for the language of his actions, in such a case, is much more effectual than the bare signification of his words. Not that I think that the law only should be preached: ministers may preach other things too little. The gospel is to be preached as well as the law, and the law is to be preached only to make way for the gospel, and in order that it may be preached more effectually. The main work of ministers is to preach the gospel: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness." So that a minister would miss it very much if he should insist so much on the terrors of the law, as to forget his Lord, and neglect to preach the gospel; but yet the law is very much to be insisted on, and the preaching of the gospel is like to be in vain without it.

And certainly such earnestness and affection in speaking is beautiful, as becomes the nature and importance of the subject. Not but that there may be such a thing as an indecent boisterousness in a preacher, something besides what naturally arises from the nature of his subject, and in which the matter and manner do not well agree together. Some talk of it as an unreasonable thing to fright persons to heaven; but I think it is a reasonable thing to endeavor to fright persons away from hell. They stand upon its brink, and are just ready to fall into it, and are senseless of their danger. Is it not a reasonable thing to fright a person out of a house on fire? The word *fright* is commonly used for sudden, causeless fear, or groundless surprise; but surely a just fear, for which there is good reason, is not to be spoken against under any such name.

SECTION II.

What are distinguishing Scripture evidences of a work of the Spirit of God.

Having shown, in some instances, what are not evidences that a work wrought among a people, is not a work of the Spirit of God, I now proceed, in the second place, as was proposed, to show positively, what are the sure, distinguishing Scripture evidences and marks of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may proceed in judging of any operation we find in ourselves,

or see among a people, without danger of being misled.—And in this, as I said before, I shall confine myself wholly to those marks which are given us by the apostle in the chapter wherein is my text, where this matter is particularly handled, and more plainly and fully than anywhere else in the Bible. And in speaking to these marks, I shall take them in the order in which I find them in the chapter.

I. When the operation is such as to raise their esteem of that Jesus who was born of the Virgin, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; and seems more to confirm and establish their minds in the truth of what the gospel declares to us of his being the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; it is a sure sign that it is from the Spirit of God. This sign the apostle gives us in the 2d and 3d verses, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; and every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." This implies a confessing not only that there was such a person who appeared in Palestine, and did and suffered those things that are recorded of him, but that he was Christ, i. e. the Son of God, anointed to be Lord and Saviour, as the name Jesus Christ implies That thus much is implied in the apostle's meaning, is confirmed by the 15th verse, where the apostle is still on the same subject of signs of the true Spirit: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." And it is to be observed that the word *confess*, as it is often used in the New Testament, signifies more than merely *allowing:* it implies an establishing and confirming of a thing by testimony, and declaring it with manifestation of esteem and affection; so Matt. x. 32, "Whosoever therefore shall *confess* me before men, him will I *confess* also before my Father which is in heaven." Rom. xv. 9, "I will *confess* to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name." And Phil. ii. 11, "That every tongue shall *confess* that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." And that this is the force of the expression, as the apostle John uses it in the place, is confirmed in the next chapter, ver. 1, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." And by that parallel place of the apostle Paul, where we have the same rule given to distinguish the true Spirit from all counterfeits, 1 Cor. xii. 3: "Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed (or will show an ill or mean esteem of him); and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

So that if the spirit that is at work among a people is plainly observed to work so as to convince them of Christ, and lead them to him—to confirm their minds in the belief of the history of Christ as he appeared in the flesh—and that he is the Son of God, and was sent of God to save sinners; that he is the only Saviour, and that they stand in great need of him; and if he seems to beget in them higher and more honorable thoughts of him than they used to have, and to incline their affections more to him; it is a sure sign that it is the true and right Spirit; however incapable we may be to determine, whether that conviction and affection be in that manner, or to that degree, as to be saving or not.

But the words of the apostle are remarkable; the person to whom the Spirit gives testimony, and for whom he raises their esteem, must be that Jesus who appeared in the flesh, and not another Christ in his stead; nor any mystical, fantastical Christ; such as the light within. This the spirit of Quakers extols, while it diminishes their esteem of and dependence upon an outward Christ—or Jesus as he came in the flesh—and leads them off from him; but the spirit

that gives testimony for that Jesus, and leads to him, can be no other than the Spirit of God.

The devil has the most bitter and implacable enmity against that person, especially in his character of the Saviour of men; he mortally hates the story and doctrine of his redemption; he never would go about to beget in men more honorable thoughts of him, and lay greater weight on his instructions and commands. The Spirit that inclines men's hearts to the seed of the woman, is not the spirit of the serpent that has such an irreconcilable enmity against him. He that heightens men's esteem of the glorious Michael, that prince of the angels, is not the spirit of the dragon that is at war with him.

II. When the spirit that is at work operates against the interests of Satan's kingdom, which lies in encouraging and establishing sin, and cherishing men' worldly lusts; this is a sure sign that it is a true, and not a false spirit. This sign we have given us in the 4th and 5th verses: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Here is a plain antithesis: it is evident that the apostle is still comparing those that are influenced by the two opposite kinds of spirits, the true and the false, and showing the difference; the one is of God, and overcomes the spirit of the world; the other is of the world, and speaks and savors of the things of the world. The spirit of the devil is here called, "he that is in the world." Christ says, "My kingdom is not of this world." But it is otherwise with Satan's kingdom; he is "the god of this world."

What the apostle means by *the world*, or "the things that are of the world," we learn by his own words, in the 2d chapter of this epistle, 15th and 16th verses: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." So that by the world the apostle evidently means every thing that appertains to the interest of sin, and comprehends all the corruptions and lusts of men, and all those acts and objects by which they are gratified.

So that we may safely determine, from what the apostle says, that the spirit that is at work amongst a people, after such a manner as to lessen men's esteem of the pleasures, profits, and honors of the world, and to take off their hearts from an eager pursuit after these things; and to engage them in a deep concern about a future state and eternal happiness which the gospel reveals, and puts them upon earnestly seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and the spirit that convinces them of the dreadfulness of sin, the guilt it brings, and the misery to which it exposes, must needs be the Spirit of God.

It is not to be supposed that Satan would convince men of sin, and awaken the conscience; it can no way serve his end to make that candle of the Lord shine the brighter, and to open the mouth of that vicegerent of God in the soul. It is for his interest, whatever he does, to lull conscience asleep, and keep it quiet. To have that, with its eyes and mouth open in the soul, will tend to clog and hinder all his designs of darkness, and evermore to disturb his affairs, to cross his interest, and disquiet him, so that he can manage nothing to his mind without molestation. Would the devil, when he is about to establish men in sin, take such a course, in the first place, to enlighten and awaken the conscience to see the dreadfulness of sin, and make them exceedingly afraid of it, and sensible of their misery by reason of their past sins, and their great

need of deliverance from their guilt? Would he make them more careful, inquisitive, and watchful to discern what is sinful, and to avoid future sins; and so more afraid of the devil's temptations, and more careful to guard against them? What do those men do with their reason, that suppose that the Spirit that operates thus, is the spirit of the devil?

Possibly some may say, that the devil may even awaken men's consciences to deceive them, and make them think they have been the subjects of a saving work of the Spirit of God, while they are indeed still in the gall of bitterness. But to this it may be replied, that the man who has an awakened conscience, is the least likely to be deceived of any man in the world; it is the drowsy, insensible, stupid conscience that is most easily blinded. The more sensible conscience is in a diseased soul, the less easily is it quieted without a real healing The more sensible conscience is made of the dreadfulness of sin, and of the greatness of a man's own guilt, the less likely is he to rest in his own righteousness, or to be pacified with nothing but shadows. A man that has been thoroughly terrified with a sense of his own danger and misery, is not easily flattered and made to believe himself safe, without any good grounds. To awaken conscience, and convince it of the evil of sin, cannot tend to establish it, but certainly tends to make way for sin and Satan's being cut out. Therefore this is a good argument that the Spirit that operates thus, cannot be the spirit of the devil; except we suppose that Christ knew not how to argue, who told the Pharisees—who supposed that the Spirit by which he wrought was the spirit of the devil—*that Satan would not cast out Satan*, Matt. xii. 25, 26. And, therefore, if we see persons made sensible of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the displeasure of God against it; of their own miserable condition as they are in themselves, by reason of sin, and earnestly concerned for their eternal salvation, and sensible of their need of God's pity and help, and engaged to seek it in the use of the means that God has appointed, we may certainly conclude that it is from the Spirit of God, whatever effects this concern has on their bodies; though it cause them to cry out aloud, or to shriek, or to faint; or though it throw them into convulsions, or whatever other way the blood and spirits are moved.

The influence of the Spirit of God is yet more abundantly manifest, if persons have their hearts *drawn off* from the world and weaned from the objects of their worldly lusts, and taken off from worldly pursuits, by the sense they have of the excellency of divine things, and the affection they have to those spiritual enjoyments of another world, that are promised in the gospel.

III. The spirit that operates in such a manner, as to cause in men a greater regard to the Holy Scriptures, and establishes them more in their truth and divinity, is certainly the Spirit of God. This rule the apostle gives us in the 6th verse: "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us: hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." *We are of God;* that is, "we the apostles are sent forth of God, and appointed by him to teach the world, and to deliver those doctrines and instructions, which are to be their rule; *he that knoweth God, heareth us*," &c.—The apostle's argument here equally reaches all that in the same sense are *of God;* that is, all those that God has appointed and inspired to deliver to his church its rule of faith and practice; all the prophets and apostles, whose doctrine God has made the foundation on which he has built his church, as in Eph. ii. 20; in a word, all the penmen of the Holy Scriptures. The devil never would attempt to beget in persons a regard to that divine word which God has given to be the great and standing rule for the direction of his church in all religious matters

and all concerns of their souls, in all ages. A spirit of delusion will not incline persons to seek direction at the mouth of God. To the law and to the testimony, is never the cry of those evil spirits that have no light in them; for it is God's own direction to discover their delusions. Isa. viii. 19, 20, "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The devil does not say the same as Abraham did, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them:" nor the same that the voice from heaven did concerning Christ, "Hear ye him." Would the spirit of error, in order to deceive men, beget in them a high opinion of the infallible rule, and incline them to think much of it, and be very conversant with it? Would the prince of darkness, in order to promote his kingdom of darkness, lead men to the sun? The devil has ever shown a mortal spite and hatred towards that holy book the Bible: he has done all in his power to extinguish that light; and to draw men off from it: he knows it to be that light by which his kingdom of darkness is to be overthrown. He has had for many ages experience of its power to defeat his purposes, and baffle his designs: it is his constant plague. It is the main weapon which Michael uses in his war with him: it is the sword of the Spirit, that pierces him and conquers him. It is that great and strong sword, with which God punishes Leviathan, that crooked serpent. It is that sharp sword that we read of, Rev. xix. 15, that proceeds out of the mouth of him that sat on the horse, with which he smites his enemies. Every text is a dart to torment the old serpent. He has felt the stinging smart thousands of times; therefore he is engaged against the Bible, and hates every word in it: and we may be sure that he never will attempt to raise persons' esteem of it, or affection to it. And accordingly we see it common in enthusiasts, that they depreciate this written rule, and set up the light within or some other rule above it.

IV. Another rule to judge of spirits may be drawn from those compellations given to the opposite spirits, in the last words of the 6th verse, "The spirit of truth and the spirit of error." These words exhibit the two opposite characters of the Spirit of God, and other spirits that counterfeit his operations. And therefore, if by observing the manner of the operation of a spirit that is at work among a people, we see that it operates as a spirit of truth, leading persons to truth, convincing them of those things that are true, we may safely determine that it is a right and true spirit. For instance, if we observe that the spirit at work makes men more sensible than they used to be, that there is a God, and that he is a great and a sin-hating God: that life is short, and very uncertain; and that there is another world; that they have immortal souls, and must give account of themselves to God, that they are exceeding sinful by nature and practice; that they are helpless in themselves; and confirms them in other things that are agreeable to some sound doctrine; the spirit that works thus, operates as a spirit of truth; he represents things as they truly are. He brings men to the light; for whatever makes truth manifest is light; as the Apostle Paul observes, Eph. v. 13, "But all things that are reproved (or discovered, as it is in the margin) are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." And therefore we may conclude, that it is not the spirit of darkness that doth thus discover and make manifest the truth. Christ tells us that Satan is a liar, and the father of liars; and his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness. It is upheld and promoted only by darkness and error. Satan has all his power and dominion by darkness. Hence we read of the power of

darkness, Luke xxii. 53, and Col. i. 13. And devils are called "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Whatever spirit removes our darkness, and brings us to the light, undeceives us, and, by convincing us of the truth, doth us a kindness. If I am brought to a sight of truth, and am made sensible of things as they really are, my duty is immediately to thank God for it, without standing first to inquire by what means I have such a benefit.

V. If the spirit that is at work among a people operates as a spirit of love to God and man, it is a sure sign that it is the Spirit of God. This sign the apostle insists upon from the 6th verse to the end of the chapter: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love," &c. Here it is evident, that the apostle is still comparing those two sorts of persons that are influenced by the opposite kinds of spirits; and mentions love as a mark by which we may know who has the true spirit: but this is especially evident by the 12th and 13th verses: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." In these verses love is spoken of as if it were that wherein the very nature of the Holy Spirit consisted; or, as if *divine love* dwelling in us, and the *Spirit of God* dwelling in us, were the same thing; as it is also in the last two verses of the foregoing chapter, and in the 16th verse of this chapter. Therefore this last mark which the apostle gives of the true Spirit he seems to speak of as the most eminent: and so insists much more largely upon it, than upon all the rest; and speaks expressly of both love to God and men; of *love to men* in the 7th, 11th, and 12th verses; and of *love to God*, in the 17th, 18th, and 19th verses; and of both together, in the last two verses; and of love to men, as arising from love to God, in these last two verses.

Therefore, when the spirit that is at work amongst the people, tends this way, and brings many of them to high and exalting thoughts of the Divine Being, and his glorious perfections; and works in them an admiring, delightful sense of the excellency of Jesus Christ; representing him as the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and makes him precious to the soul; winning and drawing the heart with those motives and incitements to love, of which the apostle speaks in that passage of Scripture we are upon, viz., the wonderful free love of God in giving his only-begotten Son to die for us, and the wonderful dying love of Christ to us, who had no love to him, but were his enemies, must needs be the Spirit of God, as verses 9, 10: "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And ver. 16, "And we have known, and believed, the love that God hath to us." And ver. 19, "We love him because he first loved us." The spirit that excites to love on these motives, and makes the attributes of God as revealed in the gospel, and manifested in Christ, delightful objects of contemplation; and makes the soul to long after God and Christ—after their presence and communion, acquaintance with them, and conformity to them—and to live so as to please and honor them; the spirit that quells contentions among men, and gives a spirit of peace and good-will, excites to acts of outward kindness, and earnest desires of the salvation of souls, and causes a delight in those that appear as the children of God, and followers of Christ; I say, when a spirit operates after this manner among a people, there is the highest kind of evidence of the influence of a true and divine spirit.

Indeed there is a counterfeit love, that often appears among those who are led by a spirit of delusion. There is commonly in the wildest enthusiasts a kind of union and affection, arising from self-love, occasioned by their agreeing in those things wherein they greatly differ from all others, and from which they are objects of the ridicule of all the rest of mankind. This naturally will cause them so much the more to prize those peculiarities that make them the objects of others' contempt. Thus the ancient Gnostics, and the wild fanatics that appeared at the beginning of the Reformation, boasted of their great love one to another; one sect of them, in particular, calling themselves the *family of love*. But this is quite another thing than that Christian love I have just described: it is only the working of a natural self-love, and no true benevolence, any more than the union and friendship which may be among a company of pirates, that are at war with all the rest of the world. There is enough said in this passage of the nature of a truly Christian love, thoroughly to distinguish it from all such counterfeits. It is love that arises from apprehension of the wonderful riches of the free grace and sovereignty of God's love to us, in Christ Jesus; being attended with a sense of our own utter unworthiness, as in ourselves the enemies and haters of God and Christ, and with a renunciation of all our own excellency and righteousness. See verses 9, 10, 11, and 19. The surest character of true divine supernatural love—distinguishing it from counterfeits that arise from a natural self-love—is, that the Christian virtue of *humility* shines in it; that which above all others renounces, abases, and annihilates what we term *self*. Christian love, or true charity, is a humble love. 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked." When, therefore, we see love in persons attended with a sense of their own littleness, vileness, weakness, and utter insufficiency; and so with self-diffidence, self-emptiness, self-renunciation, and poverty of spirit; these are the manifest tokens of the Spirit of God. He that thus dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him. What the apostle speaks of as a great evidence of the true Spirit, is God's love or Christ's love; as ver. 12, "His love is perfected in us." What kind of love that is, we may see best in what appeared in Christ's example. The love that appeared in that Lamb of God, was not only a love to friends, but to enemies, and a love attended with a meek and humble spirit. "Learn of me," says he, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." Love and humility are two things the most contrary to the spirit of the devil, of any thing in the world; for the character of that evil spirit, above all things, consists in pride and malice.

Thus I have spoken particularly to the several marks the apostle gives us of a work of the true Spirit. There are some of these things which the devil *would not* do if he could: thus he would not awaken the conscience, and make men sensible of their miserable state by reason of sin, and sensible of their great need of a Saviour; and he would not confirm men in the belief that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners, or raise men's value and esteem of him: he would not beget in men's minds an opinion of the necessity, usefulness, and truth of the Holy Scriptures, or incline them to make much use of them; nor would he show men the truth, in things that concern their souls' interest; to undeceive them, and lead them out of darkness into light, and give them a view of things as they really are. And there are other things that the devil *neither can nor will* do; he will not give men a spirit of divine love, or Christian humility and poverty of spirit; nor *could* he if he would. He cannot give those things he has not himself: these things are as contrary as possible to his nature. And therefore when there is an extraordinary influence or operation appearing on

the minds of a people, if these things are found in it, we are safe in determining that it is the work of God, whatever other circumstances it may be attended with, whatever instruments are used, whatever methods are taken to promote it; whatever means a sovereign God, whose judgments are a great deep, employs to carry it on; and whatever motion there may be of the animal spirits, whatever effects may be wrought on men's bodies. These marks, that the apostle has given us, are sufficient to stand alone, and support themselves. They plainly show *the finger of God*, and are sufficient to outweigh a thousand such little objections, as many make from oddities, irregularities, errors in conduct, and the delusions and scandals of some professors.

But here some may *object* to the sufficiency of the marks given, what the Apostle Paul says in 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

To which I *answer*, that this can be no objection against the sufficiency of these marks to distinguish the true from the false spirit, in those false apostles and prophets, in whom the devil was transformed into an angel of light, because it is principally with a view to them that the apostle gives these marks: as appears by the words of the text, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God;" and this is the reason he gives, because many false prophets are gone out into the world: viz., "There are many gone out into the world who are the ministers of the devil, who transform themselves into the prophets of God, in whom the spirit of the devil is transformed into an angel of light; therefore try the spirits by these rules that I shall give you, that you may be able to distinguish the true spirit from the false, under such a crafty disguise." Those *false prophets* the apostle *John* speaks of, are doubtless the same sort of men with those *false apostles*, and deceitful workers, that the Apostle *Paul* speaks of, in whom the devil was transformed into an angel of light: and therefore we may be sure that these marks are especially adapted to distinguish between the true Spirit, and the devil transformed into an angel of light, because they are given especially for that end; that is the apostle's declared purpose and design, to give marks by which the true Spirit may be distinguished from that sort of counterfeits.

And if we look over what is said about these false prophets, and false apostles (as there is much said about them in the New Testament), and take notice in what manner the devil was transformed into an angel of light in them, we shall not find any thing that in the least injures the sufficiency of these marks to distinguish the true Spirit from such counterfeits. The devil transformed himself into an angel of light, as there was in them a show, and great boast, of extraordinary knowledge in divine things, Col. ii. 8, 1 Tim. i. 6, 7, and chap. vi. 3—5, 2 Tim. ii. 14—18, Tit. i. 10, 16. Hence their followers called themselves *Gnostics*, from their great pretended knowledge: and the devil in them mimicked the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, in visions, revelations, prophecies, miracles, &c. Hence they are called false apostles, and false prophets: see Matt. xxiv. 24. Again, there was a false show of, and lying pretensions to, great holiness and devotion in words, Rom. xvi. 17, 18, Ephes. iv. 14. Hence they are called deceitful workers, and wells and clouds without water, 2 Cor. xi 13, 2 Pet. ii. 17, Jude 12. There was also in them a show of extraordinary piety and righteousness in their superstitious worship, Col. ii. 16—23. So they had a false, proud, and bitter zeal, Gal. iv. 17, 18, 1 Tim. i. 6, and chap. vi. 4, 5. And likewise a false show of humility, in affecting an extraordinary outward meanness and dejection, when indeed they were "vainly

puffed up in their fleshly mind :" and made a righteousness of their humility and were exceedingly lifted up with their eminent piety, Col ii. 18, 23. But how do such things as these in the least injure those things that have been mentioned as the distinguishing evidences of the true Spirit?—Besides such vain shows which may be from the devil, there are common influences of the Spirit, which are often mistaken for saving grace; but these are out of the question, because though they are not saving, yet are the work of the true Spirit.

Having thus fulfilled what I first proposed, in considering what are the certain, distinguishing marks, by which we may safely proceed in judging of any work that falls under our observation, whether it be the work of the Spirit of God or no; I now proceed to the APPLICATION.

SECTION III.

Practical Inferences.

1. From what has been said, I will venture to draw this inference, *viz., that the extraordinary influence that has lately appeared causing an uncommon concern and engagedness of mind about the things of religion, is undoubtedly, in the general, from the Spirit of God.* There are but two things that need to be known in order to such a work's being judged of, *viz., facts* and *rules.* The *rules* of the word of God we have had laid before us; and as to *facts*, there are but two ways that we can come at them, so as to be in a capacity to compare them with the rules, either by our own observation, or by information from others who have had opportunity to observe them.

As to this work, there are many things concerning it that are notorious, and which, unless the apostle John was out in his rules, are sufficient to determine it to be in general the work of God. The Spirit that is at work, takes off persons' minds from the vanities of the world, and engages them in a deep concern about eternal happiness, and puts them upon earnestly seeking their salvation, and convinces them of the dreadfulness of sin, and of their own guilty and miserable state as they are by nature. It awakens men's consciences, and makes them sensible of the dreadfulness of God's anger, and causes in them a great desire and earnest care and endeavor to obtain his favor. It puts them upon a more diligent improvement of the means of grace which God has appointed; accompanied with a greater regard to the word of God, a desire of hearing and reading it, and of being more conversant with it than they used to be. And it is notoriously manifest, that the spirit that is at work, in general, operates as a spirit of truth, making persons more sensible of what is really true in those things that concern their eternal salvation: as, that they must die, and that life is very short and uncertain; that there is a great sin-hating God, to whom they are accountable, and who will fix them in an eternal state in another world; and that they stand in great need of a Saviour. It makes persons more sensible of the value of Jesus who was crucified, and their need of him; and that it puts them upon earnestly seeking an interest in him. It cannot be but that these things should be apparent to people in general through the land; for these things are not done in a corner; the work has not been confined to a few towns, in some remoter parts, but has been carried on in many places all over the land, and in most of the principal, the populous, and public places in it. Christ in this respect has wrought amongst us, in the same manner that he wrought his miracles in Judea. It has now been continued for a considerable time; so that there has

been a great opportunity to observe the manner of the work. And all such as have been very conversant with the subjects of it, see a great deal more, that, by the rules of the apostle, does clearly and certainly show it to be the work of God

And here I would observe, that the nature and tendency of a spirit that is at work, may be determined with much greater certainty, and less danger of being imposed upon, when it is observed in a great multitude of people of all sorts, and in various places, than when it is only seen in a few, in some particular place, that have been much conversant one with another. A few particular persons may agree to put a cheat upon others, by a false pretence, and professing things of which they never were conscious. But when the work is spread over great parts of a country, in places distant from one another, among people of all sorts and of all ages, and in multitudes possessed of a sound mind, good understanding, and known integrity; there would be the greatest absurdity in supposing, from all the observation that can be made by all that is heard from and seen in them—for many months together, and by those who are most intimate with them in these affairs, and have long been acquainted with them —that yet it cannot be determined what kind of influence the operation they are under has upon people's minds. Can it not be determined whether it tends to awaken their consciences, or to stupify them; whether it inclines them more to seek their salvation, or neglect it; whether it seems to confirm them in a belief of the Scriptures, or to lead them to deism; whether it makes them have more regard for the great truths of religion, or less?

And here it is to be observed, that for persons to profess that they are so convinced of certain divine truths, as to esteem and love them in a *saving manner*, and for them to profess, that they are *more convinced* or confirmed in the truth of them, than they used to be, and find that they have a greater regard to them than they had before, are two very different things. Persons of honesty and common sense, have much greater right to demand credit to be given to the latter profession, than to the former. Indeed in the former, it is less likely that a people in general should be deceived, than some particular persons. But whether persons' convictions, and the alteration in their dispositions and affections, be in a degree and manner that is saving, is beside the present question. If there be such effects on people's judgments, dispositions, and affections, as have been spoken of, whether they be in a degree and manner that is saving or no, it is nevertheless a sign of the influence of the Spirit of God. Scripture rules serve to distinguish the common influences of the Spirit of God, as well as those that are saving, from the influence of other causes.

And as, by the providence of God, I have for some months past been much amongst those who have been the subjects of the work in question; and particularly, have been in the way of seeing and observing those extraordinary things with which many persons have been offended;—such as persons' crying out aloud, shrieking, being put into great agonies of body, &c.—and have seen the manner and issue of such operations, and the fruits of them, for several months together; many of them being persons with whom I have been intimately acquainted in soul concerns, before and since; so I look upon myself called on this occasion to give my testimony, that—so far as the nature and tendency of such a work is capable of falling under the observation of a by-stander, to whom those that have been the subjects of it have endeavored to open their hearts, or can be come at by diligent and particular inquiry—this work has all those marks that have been pointed out. And this has been the case in very many instances, in *every article;* and in many others, all those marks have appeared in a very *great degree.*

The subjects of these uncommon appearances, have been of two sorts either those who have been in great distress from an apprehension of their sin and misery; or those who have been overcome with a sweet sense of the greatness, wonderfulness, and excellency of divine things Of the multitude of those of the former sort, that I have had opportunity to observe, there have been very few, but their distress has arisen apparently from real proper conviction, and being in a degree sensible of that which was the truth. And though I do not suppose, when such things were observed to be common, that persons have laid themselves under those violent restraints to avoid outward manifestations of their distress, that perhaps they otherwise would have done; yet there have been very few in whom there has been any appearance of feigning or affecting such manifestations, and very many for whom it would have been undoubtedly utterly impossible for them to avoid them. Generally, in these agonies they have appeared to be in the perfect exercise of their reason; and those of them who could speak, have been well able to give an account of the circumstances of their mind, and the cause of their distress, at the time, and were able to remember, and give an account of it afterwards. I have known a very few instances of those, who, in their great extremity, have for a short space been deprived, in some measure, of the use of reason; and among the many hundreds, and it may be thousands, that have lately been brought to such agonies, I never yet knew one lastingly deprived of their reason. In some that I have known, melancholy has evidently been mixed; and when it is so, the difference is very apparent; their distresses are of another kind, and operate quite after another manner, than when their distress is from mere conviction. It is not truth only that distresses them, but many vain shadows and notions that will not give place either to Scripture or reason. Some in their great distress have not been well able to give an account of themselves, or to declare the sense they have of things, or to explain the manner and cause of their trouble to others, that yet I have had no reason to think were not under proper convictions, and in whom there has been manifested a good issue. But this will not be at all wondered at, by those who have had much to do with souls under spiritual difficulties: some things of which they are sensible, are altogether new to them; their ideas and inward sensations are new, and what they therefore know not how to express in words. Some who, on first inquiry, said they knew not what was the matter with them, have on being particularly examined and interrogated, been able to represent their case, though of themselves they could not find expressions and forms of speech to do it.

Some suppose, that terrors producing such effects are only a fright. But certainly there ought to be a distinction made between a very great fear, or extreme distress arising from an apprehension of some dreadful truth—a cause fully proportionable to such an effect—and a needless, causeless fright. The latter is of two kinds; either, first, when persons are terrified with that which is not the truth (of which I have seen very few instances unless in case of melancholy); or, secondly, when they are in a fright from some terrible outward appearance and noise, and a general notion thence arising. These apprehend, that there is something or other terrible, they know not what; without having in their minds any particular truth whatever. Of such a kind of fright I have seen very little appearance, among either old or young.

Those who are in such extremity, commonly express a great sense of their exceeding wickedness, the multitude and aggravations of their actual sins; their dreadful pollution, enmity, and perverseness; their obstinacy and hardness of heart; a sense of their great guilt in the sight of God; and the dreadfulness

of the punishment due to sin. Very often they have a lively idea of the horrible pit of eternal misery; and at the same time it appears to them, that the great God who has them in his hands, is exceedingly angry, and his wrath appears amazingly terrible to them. God appears to them so much provoked, and his great wrath so increased; that they are apprehensive of great danger and that he will not bear with them any longer; but will now forthwith cut them off, and send them down to the dreadful pit they have in view; at the same time seeing no refuge. They see more and more of the vanity of every thing they used to trust to, and with which they flattered themselves, till they are brought wholly to despair in all, and to see that they are at the disposal of the mere will of that God who is so angry with them. Very many, in the midst of their extremity, have been brought to an extraordinary sense of their fully deserving that wrath, and the destruction which was then before their eyes. They feared every moment, that it would be executed upon them; they have been greatly convinced that this would be altogether just, and that God is indeed absolutely sovereign. Very often, some text of Scripture expressing God's sovereignty, has been set home upon their minds, whereby they have been calmed. They have been brought, as it were, to lie at God's feet; and after great agonies, a little before light has arisen, they have been composed and quiet, in submission to a just and sovereign God; but their bodily strength much spent. Sometimes their lives, to appearance, were almost gone; and then light has appeared, and a glorious Redeemer, with his wonderful, all-sufficient grace, has been represented to them often, in some sweet invitation of Scripture. Sometimes the light comes in suddenly, sometimes more gradually, filling their souls with love, admiration, joy, and self-abasement; drawing forth their hearts after the excellent lovely Redeemer, and longings to lie in the dust before him; and that others might behold, embrace, and be delivered by him. They had longings to live to his glory; but were sensible that they can do nothing of themselves, appearing vile in their own eyes, and having much jealousy over their own hearts. And all the appearances of a real change of heart have followed; and grace has acted, from time to time, after the same manner that it used to act in those that were converted formerly, with the like difficulties, temptations, buffetings, and comforts; excepting that in many, the light and comfort have been in higher degrees than ordinary. Many very young children have been thus wrought upon. There have been some instances very much like those (Mark i. 26, and chap. ix. 26,) of whom we read, that "when the devil had cried with a loud voice, and rent them sore, he came out of them." And probably those instances were designed for a type of such things as these. Some have several turns of great agonies, before they are delivered; and others have been in such distress, which has passed off, and no deliverance at all has followed.

Some object against it as great confusion, when there is a number together in such circumstances making a noise; and say, God cannot be the author of it; because he is the God of order, not of confusion. But let it be considered, what is the proper notion of confusion, but the breaking that order of things, whereby they are properly disposed, and duly directed to their end, so that the order and due connection of means being broken, they fail of their end. Now the conviction of sinners for their conversion is the obtaining of the end of religious means. Not but that I think the persons thus extraordinarily moved, should endeavor to refrain from such outward manifestations, what they well can, and should refrain to their utmost, at the time of their solemn worship But if God is pleased to convince the consciences of persons, so that they can-

not avoid great outward manifestations, even to interrupting and breaking off those public means they were attending, I do not think this is confusion, or an unhappy interruption, any more than if a company should meet on the field to pray for rain, and should be broken off from their exercise by a plentiful shower. Would to God that all the public assemblies in the land were broken off from their public exercises with such confusion as this the next Sabbath day! We need not be sorry for breaking the order of means, by obtaining the end to which that order is directed. He who is going to fetch a treasure, need not be sorry that he is stopped, by meeting the treasure in the midst of his journey.

Besides those who are overcome with conviction and distress, I have seen many of late, who have had their bodily strength taken away with a sense of the glorious excellency of the Redeemer, and the wonders of his dying love; with a very uncommon sense of their own littleness and exceeding vileness attending it, with all expressions and appearances of the greatest abasement and abhorrence of themselves. Not only new converts, but many who were, as we hope, formerly converted, have had their love and joy attended with a flood of tears, and a great appearance of contrition and humiliation, especially for their having lived no more to God's glory since their conversion. These have had a far greater sight of their vileness, and the evil of their hearts, than ever they had; with an exceeding earnestness of desire to live better for the time to come, but attended with greater self-diffidence than ever; and many have been overcome with pity to the souls of others, and longing for their salvation.—And many other things I might mention, in this extraordinary work, answering to every one of those marks which have been insisted on. So that if the apostle John knew how to give signs of a work of the true Spirit, this is such a work.

Providence has cast my lot in a place where the work of God has *formerly* been carried on. I had the happiness to be settled in that place two years with the venerable Stoddard; and was then acquainted with a number who, during that season, were wrought upon under his ministry. I have been intimately acquainted with the experiences of many others who were wrought upon under his ministry, before that period, in a manner agreeable to the doctrine of all orthodox divines. And of late, a work has been carried on there, with very much of uncommon operations; but it is evidently the same work that was carried on there, in different periods, though attended with some new circumstances. And certainly we must throw by all talk of conversion and Christian experience; and not only so, but we must throw by our Bibles, and give up revealed religion; if this be not in general the work of God. Not that I suppose the degree of the Spirit's influence is to be determined by the degree of effect on men's bodies; or, that those are always the best experiences which have the greatest influence on the body.

And as to the imprudencies, irregularities, and mixture of delusion that has been observed; it is not at all to be wondered at, that a reformation, after a long continued and almost universal deadness, should at first, when the revival is new, be attended with such things. In the first creation God did not make a complete world at once; but there was a great deal of imperfection, darkness, and mixture of chaos and confusion, after God first said, "Let there be light," before the whole stood forth in perfect form. When God at first began his great work for the deliverance of his people, after their long-continued bondage in Egypt, there were false wonders mixed with the true for a while; which hardened the unbelieving Egyptians, and made them to doubt of the divinity of the whole work. When the children of Israel first went to bring up the ark of God, after it had been neglected, and had been long absent, they sought not

he Lord after the due order, 1 Chron. xv. 13. At the time when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them. And Solomon's ships, when they brought gold, and silver, and pearls, also brought apes and peacocks. When day-light first appears after a night of darkness, we must expect to have darkness mixed with light for a while, and not have perfect day and the sun risen at once. The fruits of the earth are first green before they are ripe, and come to their proper perfection gradually; and so, Christ tells us, is the kingdom of God. Mark iv. 26, 27, 28, "So is the kingdom of God; as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day; and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how: for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

The imprudencies and errors that have attended this work, are the less to be wondered at, if it be considered, that chiefly young persons have been the subjects of it, who have less steadiness and experience, and being in the heat of youth, are much more ready to run to extremes. Satan will keep men secure as long as he can; but when he can do that no longer, he often endeavors to drive them to extremes, and so to dishonor God, and wound religion in that way. And doubtless it has been one occasion of much misconduct, that in many places, people see plainly that their ministers have an ill opinion of the work; and therefore, with just reason, durst not apply themselves to them as their guides in it; and so are without guides.—No wonder then that when a people are as sheep without a shepherd, they wander out of the way. A people in such circumstances, stand in great and continual need of guides, and their guides stand in continual need of much more wisdom than they have of their own. And if a people have ministers that favor the work, and rejoice in it, yet it is not to be expected that either the people or ministers should know so well how to conduct themselves in such an extraordinary state of things—while it is new, and what they never had any experience of before, and time to see their tendency, consequences, and issue. The happy influence of experience is very manifest at this day, in the people among whom God has settled my abode. The work which has been carried on there this year, has been much purer than that which was wrought there six years before: it has seemed to be more purely spiritual; free from natural and corrupt mixtures, and any thing savoring of enthusiastic wildness and extravagance. It has wrought more by deep humiliation and abasement before God and men; and they have been much freer from imprudencies and irregularities. And particularly there has been a remarkable difference in this respect, that whereas many before, in their comforts and rejoicings, did too much forget their distance from God, and were ready in their conversation together of the things of God, and of their own experiences, to talk with too much lightness; but now they seem to have no disposition that way, but rejoice with a more solemn, reverential, humble joy, as God directs, Psal. ii. 11. Not because the joy is not as great, and in many instances much greater. Many among us who were wrought upon in that former season, have now had much greater communications from heaven than they had then. Their rejoicing operates in another manner; it abases them, breaks their heart, and brings them into the dust. When they speak of their joys, it is not with laughter, but a flood of tears. Thus those who laughed before, weep now, and yet by their united testimony, their joy is vastly purer and sweeter than that which before did more raise their animal spirits. They are now more like Jacob, when God appeared to him at Bethel, when he saw the ladder that reached to heaven, and said, "How dreadful is this

place!" And like Moses, when God showed him his glory on the mount when he made haste and "bowed himself unto the earth."

II. Let us all be hence warned, *by no means to oppose, or do any thing in the least to clog or hinder, the work; but, on the contrary, do our utmost to promote it.* Now Christ is come down from heaven in a remarkable and wonderful work of his Spirit, it becomes all his professed disciples to acknowledge him, and give him honor.

The example of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' times, is enough to beget in those who do not acknowledge this work, a great jealousy of themselves, and to make them exceeding cautious of what they say or do. Christ then was in the world, and the world knew him not: he came to his own professing people, and his own received him not. That coming of Christ had been much spoken of in the prophecies of Scripture which they had in their hands, and it had been long expected; and yet because Christ came in a manner they did not expect, and which was not agreeable to their carnal reason, they would not own him. Nay, they opposed him, counted him a madman, and pronounced the spirit that he wrought by to be the spirit of the devil. They stood and wondered at the great things done, and knew not what to make of them; but yet they met with so many stumbling-blocks, that they finally could not acknowledge him. And when the Spirit of God came to be poured out so wonderfully in the apostles' days, they looked upon it as confusion and distraction. They were *astonished* by what they saw and heard, but not *convinced.* And especially was the work of God then rejected by those that were most conceited of their own understanding and knowledge, agreeable to Isa. xxix. 14: "Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." And many who had been in reputation for religion and piety, had a great spite against the work, because they saw it tended to diminish their honor, and to reproach their formality and lukewarmness. Some, upon these accounts, maliciously and openly opposed and reproached the work of the Spirit of God, and called it the work of the devil, against inward conviction, and so were guilty of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

There is another, a spiritual coming of Christ, to set up his kingdom in the world, that is as much spoken of in Scripture prophecy as that first coming, and which has long been expected by the church of God. We have reason to think, from what is said of this, that it will be, in many respects, parallel with the other. And certainly, that low state into which the visible church of God has lately been sunk is very parallel with the state of the Jewish church, when Christ came; and therefore no wonder at all, that when Christ comes, his work should appear a strange work to most; yea, it would be a wonder if it should be otherwise. Whether the present work be the beginning of that great and frequently predicted coming of Christ to set up his kingdom, or not, it is evident, from what has been said, that it is a work of the same Spirit, and of the same nature. And there is no reason to doubt, but that the conduct of persons who continue long to refuse acknowledging Christ in the work—especially those who are set to be teachers in his church—will be in like manner provoking to God, as it was in the Jews of old, while refusing to acknowledge Christ; notwithstanding what they may plead of the great stumbling-blocks that are in the way, and the cause they have to doubt of the work. The teachers of the Jewish church found innumerable stumbling-blocks, that were to them insuperable. Many things appeared in Christ, and in the work of the Spirit after his

ascension, which were exceeding strange to them; they seemed assured that they had just cause for their scruples. Christ and his work were to the Jews a stumbling-block; "But blessed is he," says Christ, "whosoever shall not be offended in me." As strange and as unexpected as the manner of Christ's appearance was, yet he had not been long in Judea working miracles, before all those who had opportunity to observe, and yet refused to acknowledge him, brought fearful guilt upon themselves in the sight of God; and Christ condemned them, that thought "they could discern the face of the sky, and of the earth, yet they could not discern the signs of those times. "And why," says he, "even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?" Luke xii. at the latter end.

It is not to be supposed that the great Jehovah has bowed the heavens, and appeared here now for so long a time, in such a glorious work of his power and grace—in so extensive a manner, in the most public places of the land, and in almost all parts of it—without giving such evidences of his presence, that great numbers, and even many teachers in his church, can remain guiltless in his sight, without ever receiving and acknowledging him, and giving him honour, and appearing to rejoice in his gracious presence; or without so much as once giving him thanks for so glorious and blessed a work of his grace, wherein his goodness does more appear, than if he had bestowed on us all the temporal blessings that the world affords. A long-continued silence in such a case is undoubtedly provoking to God; especially in ministers. It is a secret kind of opposition, that really tends to hinder the work. Such silent ministers stand in the way of the work of God, as Christ said of old, "He that is not with us is against us." Those who stand wondering at this strange work, not knowing what to make of it, and refusing to receive it—and ready it may be sometimes to speak contemptibly of it, as was the case with the Jews of old—would do well to consider, and to tremble at St. Paul's words to them, Acts xiii. 40, 41: "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Those who cannot believe the work to be true, because of the extraordinary degree and manner of it, should consider how it was with the unbelieving lord in Samaria, who said, "Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" To whom Elisha said, "Behold, thou shall see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." Let all to whom this work is a cloud and darkness—as the pillar of cloud and fire was to the Egyptians—take heed that it be not their destruction, while it gives light to God's Israel.

I would entreat those who quiet themselves, that they proceed on a principle of prudence, and are waiting to see the issue of things—and what fruits those that are the subjects of this work will bring forth in their lives and conversations—to consider, whether this will justify a long refraining from acknowledging Christ when he appears so wonderfully and graciously present in the land. It is probable that many of those who are thus waiting, know not for what they are waiting. If they wait to see a work of God without difficulties and stumbling-blocks, it will be like the fool's waiting at the river side to have the water all run by. A work of God without stumbling-blocks is never to be expected. "It must needs be that offences come." There never yet was any great manifestation that God made of himself to the world, without many difficulties attending it. It is with the works of God, as with his word: they seem at first full of things that are strange, inconsistent, and difficult to the carnal unbelieving hearts of men. Christ and his work always was, and always will be, a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, a gin and a snare to many.

The prophet Hosea (chap. xiv.), speaking of a glorious revival of religion in God's church--when God would be as the dew unto Israel, who should grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, whose branches should spread, &c.—concludes all thus: "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."

It is probable that the stumbling-blocks that now attend this work, will in some respects be increased, and not diminished. We probably shall see more instances of apostasy and gross iniquity among professors. And if one kind of stumbling-blocks are removed, it is to be expected that others will come. It is with Christ's works as it was with his parables; things that are difficult to men's dark minds are ordered of purpose, for the trial of their dispositions and spiritual sense; and that those of corrupt minds and of an unbelieving, perverse, cavilling spirit, "seeing might see and not understand." Those who are now waiting to see the issue of this work, think they shall be better able to determine by and by; but probably many of them are mistaken. The Jews that saw Christ's miracles, waited to see better evidences of his being the Messiah; they wanted a sign from heaven; but they waited in vain; their stumbling-blocks did not diminish, but increase. They found no end to them, and so were more and more hardened in unbelief. Many have been praying for that glorious reformation spoken of in Scripture, who knew not what they have been praying for (as it was with the Jews when they prayed for the coming of Christ), and who, if it should come, would not acknowledge or receive it.

This pretended prudence, in persons waiting so long before they acknowledged this work, will probably in the end prove the greatest imprudence Hereby they will fail of any share of so great a blessing, and will miss the most precious opportunity of obtaining divine light, grace, and comfort, heavenly and eternal benefits, that God ever gave in New England. While the glorious fountain is set open in so wonderful a manner, and multitudes flock to it and receive a rich supply for the wants of their souls, they stand at a distance, doubting, wondering, and receiving nothing, and are like to continue thus till the precious season is past.—It is indeed to be wondered at, that those who have doubted of the work, which has been attended with such uncommon external appearances, should be easy in their doubts, without taking thorough pains to inform themselves, by going where such things have been to be seen, narrowly observing and diligently inquiring into them; not contenting themselves with observing two or three instances, nor resting till they were fully informed by their own observation. I do not doubt but that if this course had been taken, it would have convinced all whose minds are not shut up against conviction. How greatly have they erred, who only from the uncertain reproofs of others, have ventured to speak slightly of these things! That caution of an unbelieving Jew might teach them more prudence, Acts v. 38, 39: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God." Whether what has been said in this discourse be enough to produce conviction, that this is the work of God, or not; yet I hope that for the future, they will at least hearken to the caution of Gamaliel, now mentioned; so as not to oppose it, or say any thing which has even an indirect tendency to bring it into discredit, lest they should be found opposers of the Holy Ghost. There is no kind of sins so hurtful and dangerous to the souls of men, as those committed against the Holy Ghost. We had better speak against God the Father, or the Son, than to speak against the Holy

Spirit in his gracious operations on the hearts of men. Nothing will so much tend forever to prevent our having any benefit of his operations on our own souls.

If there be any who still resolutely go on to speak contemptibly of these things, I would beg of them to take heed that they be not guilty of the unpardonable sin. When the Holy Spirit is much poured out, and men's lusts, lukewarmness, and hypocrisy are reproached by its powerful operations, then is the most likely time of any, for this sin to be committed. If the work goes on, it is well if among the many that show an enmity against it, some be not guilty of this sin, if none have been already. Those who maliciously oppose and reproach this work, and call it the work of the devil, want but one thing of the unpardonable sin, and that is, doing it against inward conviction. And though some are so prudent, as not openly to oppose and reproach this work, yet it is to be feared—at this day, when the Lord is going forth so gloriously against his enemies—that many who are silent and inactive, especially ministers, will bring that curse of the angel of the Lord upon themselves, Judg. v. 23: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Since the great God has come down from heaven, and manifested himself in so wonderful a manner in this land, it is vain for any of us to expect any other than to be greatly affected by it in our spiritual state and circumstances, respecting the favor of God, one way or other. Those who do not become more happy by it, will become far more guilty and miserable. It is always so; such a season as proves an acceptable year, and a time of great favor to them who accept and improve it, proves a day of vengeance to others, Isa. lix. 2. When God sends forth his *word*, it shall not return to him void; much less his *Spirit*. When Christ was upon earth in Judea, many slighted and rejected him; but it proved in the issue to be no matter of indifference to them. God made all that people to feel that Christ had been among them; those who did not feel it to their comfort, felt it to their great sorrow. When God only sent the prophet Ezekiel to the children of Israel, he declared that whether they would hear or whether they would forbear, yet they should know that there had been a prophet among them; how much more may we suppose that when God has appeared so wonderfully in this land, that he will make every one to know that the great Jehovah had been in New England.—I come now, in the last place,

III. To apply myself to those who are the friends of this work, who have been partakers of it, and are zealous to promote it. Let me earnestly exhort such to give diligent heed to themselves to avoid all errors and misconduct, and whatever may darken and obscure the work; and to give no occasion to those who stand ready to reproach it. The apostle was careful to cut off occasion from those that desired occasion. The same apostle exhorts Titus, to maintain a strict care and watch over himself, that both his preaching and behavior might be such as "could not be condemned; that he who was of the contrary part might be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of them," Tit. ii. 7, 8 We had need to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. It is of no small consequence that we should at this day behave ourselves innocently and prudently. We must expect that the great enemy of this work will especially try his utmost with us; and he will especially triumph if he can prevail in any thing to blind and mislead us. He knows it will do more to further his purpose and interest than if he had prevailed against a hundred others. We had need to watch and pray, for we are but little children; this roaring lion is too strong for us, and this old serpent too subtle for us.

Humility and self-diffidence, and an entire dependence on our Lord Jesus Christ, will be our best defence. Let us therefore maintain the strictest watch against spiritual pride, or being lifted up with extraordinary experiences and comforts, and the high favors of heaven, that any of us may have received. We had need, after such favors, in a special manner to keep a strict and jealous eye upon our own hearts, lest there should arise self-exalting reflections upon what we have received, and high thoughts of ourselves, as being now some of the most eminent of saints and peculiar favorites of heaven, and that the secret of the Lord is especially with us. Let us not presume, that we above all are fit to be advanced as the great instructors and censors of this evil generation; and in a high conceit of our own wisdom and discerning, assume to ourselves the airs of prophets, or extraordinary ambassadors of heaven. When we have great discoveries of God made to our souls, we should not shine bright in our own eyes. Moses, when he had been conversing with God in the mount, though his face shone so as to dazzle the eyes of Aaron and the people, yet he did not shine in his own eyes; "he wist not that his face shone." Let none think themselves out of danger of this spiritual pride, even in their best frames. God saw that the apostle Paul (though probably the most eminent saint that ever lived) was not out of danger of it, no, not when he had just been conversing with God in the third heaven: see 2 Cor. xii. 7. Pride is the worst viper in the heart; it is the first sin that ever entered into the universe, lies lowest of all in the foundation of the whole building of sin, and is the most secret, deceitful, and unsearchable in its ways of working, of any lusts whatever. It is ready to mix with every thing; and nothing is so hateful to God, contrary to the spirit of the gospel, or of so dangerous consequence; and there is no one sin that does so much let in the devil into the hearts of the saints, and expose them to his delusions. I have seen it in many instances, and that in eminent saints. The devil has come in at this door presently after some eminent experience and extraordinary communion with God, and has wofully deluded and led them astray, till God has mercifully opened their eyes and delivered them; and they themselves have afterwards been made sensible that it was pride that betrayed them.

Some of the true friends of the work of God's Spirit have erred in giving too much heed to impulses and strong impressions on their minds, as though they were immediate significations from heaven to them, of something that should come to pass, or something that it was the mind and will of God that they should do, which was not signified or revealed anywhere in the Bible without those impulses. These impressions, if they are truly from the Spirit of God, are of a quite different nature from his gracious influences on the hearts of the saints: they are of the nature of the extraordinary *gifts* of the Spirit, and are properly inspiration, such as the prophets and apostles and others had of old; which the apostle distinguishes from the *grace* of the Spirit, 1 Cor. xiii.

One reason why some have been ready to lay weight on such impulses, is an opinion they have had, that the glory of the approaching happy days of the church would partly consist in restoring those *extraordinary gifts* of the Spirit. This opinion, I believe, arises partly through want of duly considering and comparing the nature and value of those two kinds of influences of the Spirit, viz., those that are ordinary and gracious, and those that are extraordinary and miraculous. The former are by far the most excellent and glorious; as the apostle largely shows, 1 Cor. xii. 31, &c. Speaking of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he says, "But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet I show you a more excellent way;" i. e., a more excellent way of the influence of the Spirit. And then he goes on, in the next chapter to show what that more ex-

excellent way is, even the grace of that Spirit, which summarily consists in charity or divine love. And throughout that chapter he shows the great preference of that above inspiration. God communicates his own nature to the soul in saving *grace* in the heart, more than in all miraculous *gifts*. The blessed image of God consists in *that* and not in *these*. The excellency, happiness, and glory of the soul, immediately consists in the former. That is a root which bears infinitely more excellent fruit. Salvation and the eternal enjoyment of God is promised to divine grace, but not to inspiration. A man may have those extraordinary gifts, and yet be abominable to God, and go to hell. The spiritual and eternal life of the soul consists in the grace of the Spirit, which God bestows only on his favorites and dear children. He has sometimes thrown out the other as it were to dogs and swine, as he did to Balaam, Saul, and Judas; and some who in the primitive times of the Christian church, committed the unpardonable sin, Heb. vi. Many wicked men at the day of judgment will plead, "Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works." The greatest privilege of the prophets and apostles, was not their being inspired and working miracles, but their eminent holiness The grace that was in their hearts, was a thousand times more their dignity and honor, than their miraculous gifts. The things in which we find David comforting himself, are not his being a king, or a prophet, but the holy influences of the Spirit of God in his heart, communicating to him divine light, love, and joy. The apostle Paul abounded in visions, revelations, and miraculous gifts, above all the apostles; but yet he esteems all things but loss for the excellency of the spiritual knowledge of Christ. It was not the gifts but the grace of the apostles, that was the proper evidence of their names being written in heaven; in which Christ directs them to rejoice, much more than in the devils being subject to them. To have grace in the heart, is a higher privilege than the blessed Virgin herself had, in having the body of the second person in the Trinity conceived in her womb, by the power of the Highest overshadowing her: Luke xi. 27, 28, "And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that thou hast sucked! But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." See also to the same purpose, Matt. xii. 47, &c.—The influence of the Holy Spirit, or divine charity in the heart, is the greatest privilege and glory of the highest archangel in heaven; yea, this is the very thing by which the creature has fellowship with God himself, with the Father and the Son, in their beauty and happiness. Hereby the saints are made partakers of the divine nature, and have Christ's joy fulfilled in themselves.

The ordinary sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God, are the *end* of all extraordinary gifts, as the apostle shows, Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13. They are good for nothing, any further than as they are subordinate to this end; they will be so far from profiting any without it, that they will only aggravate their misery. This is, as the apostle observes, the most excellent way of God's communicating his Spirit to his church, it is the greatest glory of the church in all ages. This glory is what makes the church on earth most like the church in heaven, when prophecy, and tongues, and other miraculous gifts, cease. And God communicates his Spirit only in that more excellent way of which the apostle speaks, viz., *charity* or divine love, "which never faileth." Therefore the glory of the approaching happy state of the church does not at all require these extraordinary gifts. As that state of the church will be the nearest of any to its perfect state in heaven, so I believe it will be like it in this, that all

extraordinary gifts shall have ceased and vanished away; and all those stars and the moon, with the reflected light they gave in the night, or in a dark season, shall be swallowed up in the sun of divine love. The apostle speaks of these gifts of inspiration as childish things, in comparison of the influence of the Spirit in divine love; things given to the church only to support it in its minority, till the church should have a complete standing rule established, and all the ordinary means of grace should be settled; but as things that should cease, as the church advanced to the state of manhood. 1 Cor. xiii. 11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things;" compared with the three preceding verses.

When the apostle, in this chapter, speaks of prophecies, tongues, and revelations ceasing, and vanishing away in the church—when the Christian church should be advanced from a state of minority to a state of manhood—he seems to have respect to its coming to an adult state in this world, as well as in heaven; for he speaks of such a state of manhood, wherein those three things, Faith, Hope, and Charity, should remain after miracles and revelations had ceased; as in the last verse, and "now abideth (*μενει, remaineth*) Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three." The apostle's manner of speaking here shows an evident reference to what he had just being saying before: and here is a manifest *antithesis*, between *remaining*, and that *failing*, *ceasing*, and *vanishing away*, spoken of in the 8th verse. The apostle had been showing how all those gifts of inspiration, which were the leading-strings of the Christian church in its infancy, should vanish away, when the church came to a state of manhood Then he returns to observe, what things remain after those had failed and ceased; and he observes that those three things shall remain in the church, Faith, Hope, and Charity; and therefore the adult state of the church he speaks of, is the more perfect one at which it shall arrive on earth, especially in the latter ages of the world. And this was the more properly observed to the church at Corinth, upon two accounts; because the apostle had before observed to that church, that they were in a state of infancy, chap. iii. 1, 2. And because that church seems above all others to have abounded with miraculous gifts.—When the expected glorious state of the church comes, the increase of light shall be so great that it will in some respect answer what is said, ver. 12, of *seeing face to face*. See Isa. xxv. 23, and xxv. 7.

Therefore I do not expect a restoration of these miraculous gifts in the approaching glorious times of the church, nor do I desire it. It appears to me, that it would add nothing to the glory of those times, but rather diminish from it. For my part, I had rather enjoy the sweet influences of the Spirit, showing Christ's spiritual divine beauty, infinite grace, and dying love, drawing forth the holy exercises of faith, divine love, sweet complacence, and humble joy in God, one quarter of an hour, than to have prophetical visions and revelations the whole year. It appears to me much more probable that God should give immediate revelations to his saints in the dark times of prophecy, than now in the approach of the most glorious and perfect state of his church on earth. It does not appear to me that there is any need of those extraordinary gifts to introduce this happy state, and set up the kingdom of God through the world; I have seen so much of the power of God in a more excellent way, as to convince me that God can easily do it without.

I would therefore entreat the people of God to be very cautious how they give heed to such things. I have seen them fail in very many instances, and know by experience that impressions being made with great power, and upon

the minds of true, yea eminent, saints—even in the midst of extraordinary exercises of grace, and sweet communion with God, and attended with texts of Scripture strongly impressed on the mind—are no sure signs of their being revelations from heaven. I have known such impressions fail, in some instances, attended with all these circumstances. They who leave the sure word of prophecy which God has given us as a light shining in a dark place—to follow such impressions and impulses, leave the guidance of the polar star, to follow *a Jack with a lantern.* No wonder therefore that sometimes they are led into woful extravagances.

Moreover, seeing inspiration is not to be expected, *let us not despise human learning.* They who assert that human learning is of little or no use in the work of the ministry, do not well consider what they say; if they did, they would not say it. By human learning I mean, and suppose others mean, the improvement of common knowledge by human and outward means. And therefore to say, that human learning is of no use, is as much as to say that the education of a child, or that the common knowledge which a grown man has more than a little child, is of no use. At this rate, a child of four years old is as fit for a teacher in the church of God, with the same degree of grace—and capable of doing as much to advance the kingdom of Christ, by his instruction—as a very knowing man of thirty years of age. If adult persons have greater ability and advantage to do service, because they have more knowledge than a little child, then doubtless if they have more human knowledge still, with the same degree of grace, they would have still greater ability and advantage to do service. An increase of knowledge, without doubt, increases a man's advantage either to do good or hurt, according as he is disposed. It is too manifest to be denied, that God made great use of human learning in the apostle Paul, as he also did in Moses and Solomon.

And if knowledge, obtained by human means, is not to be despised, then it will follow that the means of obtaining it are not to be neglected, viz., *study;* and that this is of great use in order to a preparation for publicly instructing others. And, though having the heart full of the powerful influences of the Spirit of God, may at some time enable persons to speak profitably, yea, very excellently, without study; yet this will not warrant us needlessly to cast ourselves down from the pinnacle of the temple, depending upon it that the angel of the Lord will bear us up, and keep us from dashing our foot against a stone, when there is another way to go down, though it be not so quick. And I would pray that *method* in public discourses, which tends greatly to help both the understanding and memory, may not be wholly neglected.

Another thing I would beg the dear children of God more fully to consider of is, how far, and upon what grounds, the rules of the Holy Scriptures will truly justify their passing censures upon other professing Christians, as hypocrites, and ignorant of real religion. We all know that there is a judging and censuring of some sort or other, that the Scripture very often and very strictly forbids. I desire that those rules of Scripture may be looked into, and thoroughly weighed; and that it may be considered whether our taking it upon us to discern the state of others, and to pass sentence upon them as wicked men, though professing Christians, and of a good visible conversation, be not really forbidden by Christ in the New Testament. If it be, then doubtless the disciples of Christ ought to avoid this practice, however sufficient they may think themselves for it, or however needful or of good tendency they may think it. It is plain that the sort of judgment which God claims as his prerogative, whatever that be, is forbidden. We know that a certain judging of the hearts

of the children of men, is often spoken of as the great prerogative of God, and which belongs only to him, as in 1 Kings viii. 39: "Forgive, and do, and give unto every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest: for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." And if we examine, we shall find that the judging of hearts which is spoken of as God's prerogative, relates not only to the aims and dispositions of men's hearts in particular actions, but chiefly to the state of their hearts as the professors of religion, and with regard to that profession. This will appear very manifest by looking over the following Scriptures; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9, Psal. vii. 9, 10, 11, Psalm xxvi. throughout, Prov. xvi. 2, and xvii. 3, and xxi. 2; Job ii. 23, 24, 25, Rev. ii. 22, 23. That sort of judging, which is God's proper business, is forbidden, as Rom. xiv. 4: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Jam. iv. 12, "There is one lawgiver that is able to save or destroy; who art thou that judgest another?" 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self; but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

Again, whatsoever kind of judging is the proper work and business of the day of judgment, is what we are forbidden, as in 1 Cor. iv. 5: "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come; who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God." But to distinguish hypocrites, that have the form of godliness and the visible conversation of godly men from true saints, or to separate the sheep from the goats, is the proper business of the day of judgment; yea, it is represented as the main business and end of that day. They, therefore, do greatly err who take it upon them positively to determine who are sincere, and who are not; to draw the dividing line between true saints and hypocrites, and to separate between sheep and goats, setting the one on the right hand and the other on the left; and to distinguish and gather out the tares from amongst the wheat. Many of the servants of the owner of the field are very ready to think themselves sufficient for this, and are forward to offer their service to this end; but their Lord says, "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest;" and, in the time of harvest, I will take care to see a thorough separation made; as Matt. xiii. 28, 29, 30. Agreeably to that forementioned prohibition of the apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 5, "Judge nothing before the time." In this parable, by the servants who have the care of the fruit of the field, is doubtless meant the same with the servants who have the care of the fruit of the vineyard, Luke xx., and who are elsewhere represented as servants of the Lord of the harvest, appointed as laborers in his harvest. These we know are ministers of the gospel. *Now* is that parable in the 13th of Matthew fulfilled: "While men sleep" (during a long sleepy, dead time in the church), "the enemy has sowed tares;" now is the time "when the blade is sprung up," and religion is reviving; and now some of the servants who have the care of the field say, "Let us go and gather up the tares." I know there is a great aptness in men who suppose they have had some experience of the power of religion, to think themselves sufficient to discern and determine the state of others by a little conversation with them; and experience has taught me that this is an error. I once did not imagine that the heart of man had been so unsearchable as it is. I am less charitable, and less uncharitable than once I was. I find more things in wicked men that may counterfeit, and make a fair show of piety; and more ways that the remaining corruption of the

godly may make them appear like carnal men, formalists, and dead hypocrites, than once I knew of. The longer I live, the less I wonder that God challenges it as his prerogative to try the hearts of the children of men, and directs that this business should be let alone till harvest. I desire to adore the wisdom of God, and his goodness to me and my fellow-creatures, that he has not committed this great business into the hands of such a poor, weak, and dim-sighted creature; one of so much blindness, pride, partiality, prejudice, and deceitfulness of heart; but has committed it into the hands of one infinitely fitter for it, and has made it his prerogative.

The talk of some persons, and the account they give of their experiences, is exceedingly satisfying, and such as forbids and banishes the thought of their being any other than the precious children of God. It obliges and as it were forces full charity; but yet we must allow the Scriptures to stand good that speak of every thing in the saint, belonging to the spiritual and divine life, as hidden, Col. iii. 3, 4. Their food is the hidden manna; they have meat to eat that others know not of; a stranger intermeddles not with their joys. The heart in which they possess their divine distinguishing ornaments, is the hidden man, and in the sight of God only, 1 Pet. iii. 4. Their new name, which Christ has given them, no man knows but he that receives it, Rev. ii. 17. The praise of the true Israelites, whose circumcision is that of the heart, is not of men, but of God, Rom. ii. 29; that is, they can be certainly known and discerned to be Israelites, so as to have the honor that belongs to such, only of God; as appears by the use of the like expression by the same apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 5. Here he speaks of its being God's prerogative to judge who are upright Christians, and what he will do at the day of judgment, adding, "and then shall every man have praise of God."

The instance of *Judas* is remarkable; whom—though he had been so much amongst the rest of the disciples, all persons of true experience, yet—his associates never seemed to have entertained a thought of his being any other than a true disciple, till he discovered himself by his scandalous practice. And the instance of *Ahitophel* is also very remarkable; David did not suspect him, though so wise and holy a man, so great a divine, and had such a great acquaintance with Scripture. He knew more than all his teachers, more than the ancients, was grown old in experience, and was in the greatest ripeness of his judgment. He was a great prophet, and was intimately acquainted with Ahitophel, he being his familiar friend, and most intimate companion in religious and spiritual concerns. Yet David not only never discovered him to be a hypocrite, but relied upon him as a true saint. He relished his religious discourse, it was sweet to him, and he counted him an eminent saint; so that he made him above any other man his guide and counsellor in soul matters; but yet he was not only no saint, but a notoriously wicked man, a murderous, vile wretch. Psal. lv. 11—14, "Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets: for it was not an open enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance: we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

To suppose that men have ability and right to determine the state of the souls of visible Christians, and so to make an open separation between saints and hypocrites, that true saints may be of one visible company, and hypocrites of another, separated by a partition that men make, carries in it an inconsistency: for it supposes that God has given men power to make another

visible church, within his visible church; for by visible Christians or visible saints is meant, persons who have a right to be received as such in the eye of a public charity. None can have a right to exclude any one of this visible church but in the way of that regular ecclesiastical proceeding, which God has established in his visible church.—I beg of those who have a true zeal for promoting this work of God, well to consider these things. I am persuaded, that as many of them as have much to do with souls, if they do not hearken to me now, will be of the same mind when they have had more experience.

And another thing that I would entreat the zealous friends of this glorious work of God to avoid, is managing the controversy with opposers with too much heat, and appearance of an angry zeal; and particularly insisting very much in public prayer and preaching, on the persecution of opposers. If their persecution were ten times so great as it is, methinks it would not be best to say so much about it. If it becomes Christians to be like lambs, not apt to complain and cry when they are hurt; it becomes them to be dumb and not to open their mouth, after the example of our dear Redeemer; and not to be like swine, that are apt to scream aloud when they are touched. We should not be ready presently to think and speak of fire from heaven, when the Samaritans oppose us, and will not receive us into their villages. God's zealous ministers would do well to think of the direction the apostle Paul gave to a zealous minister, 2 Tim ii. 24—26: "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

I would humbly recommend to those that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and would advance his kingdom, a good attendance to that excellent rule of prudence which Christ has left us, Matt. ix. 16, 17: "No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish. But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." I am afraid the wine is now running out in some part of this land, for want of attending to this rule. For though I believe we have confined ourselves too much to a certain stated method and form in the management of our religious affairs; which has had a tendency to cause all our religion to degenerate into mere formality; yet whatever has the appearance of a great innovation—that tends much to shock and surprise people's minds, and to set them a talking and disputing—tends greatly to hinder the progress of the power of religion. It raises the opposition of some, diverts the minds of others, and perplexes many with doubts and scruples. It causes people to swerve from their great business, and turn aside to vain jangling. Therefore that which is very much beside the common practice, unless it be a thing in its own nature of considerable importance, had better be avoided. Herein we shall follow the example of one who had the greatest success in propagating the power of religion: 1 Cor. ix. 20—23, "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS

ON

IMPORTANT DOCTRINES.

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CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT, A FUTURE STATE, AND THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

§ 1. THE God that is the Creator of the world, is doubtless also the Governor of it: for he is able to govern it. He that had power to give being to the world, and set all the parts of it in order, has doubtless power to dispose of the world that he has made; to continue the order he has constituted, or to alter it. He that gave being at first, can continue being, or put an end to it; and therefore nothing can stand in his way. If any thing stands in his way, he can put an end to its being, or diminish it, and weaken it as he pleases. He that constituted the world in a certain order, can, if he pleases constitute things otherwise, in another order, either in whole or in part, at once or gradually; or, what is the same thing, he can cause what alterations he pleases in the state of things, or cause the state of things to proceed in what course he pleases. He that first gave the laws of nature, must have all nature in his hands: so that it is evident God has the world in his hands, to dispose of as he pleases. And, as God is able, so he is inclined, to govern the world. For, as he is an understanding being, he had some end in what he did, when he made the world: he made the world for some end, otherwise he did not act as a voluntary agent in making the world. And, if this world did not come into being by the voluntary act of some cause, then it was not made. That being never acts voluntarily, that has no end in what he does, and aims at nothing at all in it. Neither God nor man is properly said to make any thing that necessarily or accidentally proceeds from them, but that only which is voluntarily produced. Besides, we see in the particular parts of the world, that God had a particular end in their formation. They are fitted for such an end. By which it appears, that the Creator did act as a voluntary agent, proposing final causes in the work of creation: and he that made the particular parts for certain ends, doubtless made the whole for a certain end. And, if God made the world for some end, doubtless he will choose to have this world disposed of to answer that end. For his proposing the end, supposes, that he chooses it should be obtained. Therefore, it follows, that God will choose to take care that the world be disposed of to the obtaining of his own ends, which is the same thing as his choosing to have the government of the world. And it is manifest, in fact, that God is not careless how the affairs and concerns of the world that he has made proceed, because he was not careless of this matter in the creation itself; as it is apparent, by the manner and order in which things were created, that God, in creating, took care of the future progress and state of things in the world. He contrived that things might so and so proceed and be regulated, and that things might go in such and such a course, and that such and such

events might be produced. So that it is manifest, the Creator is not careless of the state of things in his world. This being established, I now proceed to show, that it must be, that God maintains a moral government over the world of mankind.

First, If it be certain, that God is concerned, and does take care how things proceed in the state of the world that he has made, then he will be especially concerned how things proceed in the state of the world of mankind. This is manifest by three things: 1. Mankind are the principal part of the visible creation. They are in the image of their Creator, in that respect, that they have understanding, and are voluntary agents, and can produce works of their own will, design and contrivance, as God does. And the Creator looks upon them as the principal part of his visible creation, as is manifest, because he hath set them at the head of his creation. He has subjected other things to them. The world is evidently made to be a habitation for man, and all things about him are subordinated to his use. Now, if God be careful how the world that he has made be regulated, that his end may be answered, and that it may not be in vain, he will be especially careful of this concerning the principal part of it, and in the same proportion that it is principal or superior in his own account to the rest. Because, if that superior part be in vain, there is much more in vain, than if a less part was in vain; so much more, as his loss (as I may say) is so much the greater, in its being in vain, according as the part is superior in his account.

2. The more God has respect to any part of the world he has made, the more concerned he will be about the state of that part of the world. But it is manifest, by the creation itself, that God has more respect or regard to man, than to any other part of the visible creation; because he has evidently made and fitted other parts to man's use. If God be concerned how things proceed in the world he has made, he will be so chiefly in that part of his world that he has set his heart most upon.

3. It is evident, that God is principally concerned about the state of things in the world of mankind. In creation, he subordinated the state of things in the inferior world, to the state of things in the world of mankind; and so contrived, that the affairs of the former should be subservient to the affairs of the latter. And therefore God will not leave the world of mankind to themselves, without taking any care to govern and order their state so, that this part of the world may be regulated decently and beautifully, that there may be good order in the intelligent, voluntary, active part of God's creation, as well as in the inferior and inanimate parts of it; especially in what concerns it as an intelligent, voluntary, and active, and so a superior part of the creation: or, which is the same thing, he will take care that the world of mankind be well regulated with respect to its moral state; and so will maintain a good moral government over the world of mankind. It is evident, by the manner in which God has formed and constituted other things, that he has respect to beauty, good order and regulation, proportion and harmony; so, in the system of the world, in the seasons of the year, in the formation of plants, and of the various parts of the human body. Surely, therefore, he will not leave the principal part of the creation, about the state of which he is evidently, in fact, chiefly concerned without making any proper provision for its being in any other than a state of deformity, discord, and the most hateful and dreadful confusion. And especially so, in what relates to those things in them, by which alone they are distinguished, and are superior and more valuable than the rest of the world, viz., their intelligence, and will, and voluntary actions; and therefore, upon the account of

which alone, God has more regard to them, and is more concerned about their state.

By what has been already said, God is most concerned about the state and government of that which is highest in his creation, and which he values most; and so he is principally concerned about the ordering the state of mankind, which is a part of the creation that he has made superior, and that he values most: and therefore, in like manner, it follows, that he is principally concerned about the regulation of that which he values most in men, viz., what appertains to his intelligence and voluntary acts. If there be any thing in the principal part of the creation, that the Creator values more than other parts, it must be that wherein it is above them, or, at least, something wherein it differs from them. But the only thing wherein men differ from the inferior creation, is intelligent perception and action. This is that in which the Creator has made man to differ from the rest of the creation, and by which he has set him over it, and by which he governs the inferior creatures, and uses them for himself; and therefore, it must needs be, that the Creator should be chiefly concerned, that the state of mankind should be regulated according to his will, with respect to what appertains to him as an intelligent, voluntary creature. Hence it must be, that God does take care, that a good moral government should be maintained over men; that his intelligent, voluntary acts should be all subject to rules; and that with respect to them all, he should be the subject of judicial proceeding. For unless this be, there is no care taken, that the state of mankind, with respect to their intelligent, voluntary acts, should be regulated at all; but all things will be remedilessly in the utmost deformity, confusion and ruin. The world of mankind, instead of being superior, will be the worse, and more hateful, and the more vile and miserable, for having the faculties of reason and will; and this highest part of the creation will be the lowest, and infinitely the most confused and deformed, and detestable, without any provision for rectifying its evils. And the God of order, peace and harmony, that constituted the inferior parts of the world, which he has subjected to man, and made subservient to him, in such decency, beauty and harmony, will appear to have left this chief part of his work, and the end of all the rest, to the reign of everlasting discord, confusion and ruin; contradicting and conflicting with its own nature and faculties; having reason, and yet acting in all things contradictory to it; being men, but yet beasts; setting sense above reason; improving reason only as a weapon of mischief and destruction of God's workmanship. God has so made and constituted the world of mankind, that he has made it natural and necessary, that they should be concerned one with another, linked together in society, by the manner of their propagation, their descending one from another and their need one of another, and their inclination to society. We see, that in other parts of the creation, wherein many particulars are dependent and united into one body, there is an excellent harmony and mutual subserviency throughout the whole; as in all bodies natural. How then can we believe, that God has ordered so much of the contrary in the principal part of his creation?

Secondly, I would argue, that God must maintain a moral government over mankind, thus:—It is evident, that it was agreeable to the Creator's design, that there should be some moral government and order maintained amongst men; because, without any kind of moral government at all, either in nations, provinces, towns, or families, and also without any divine government over the whole, the world of mankind could not subsist. The world of mankind would destroy itself. Men would be not only much more destructive to each other,

than any kind of animals are to their own species, but a thousand times more than any kind of beasts are to those of any other species. Therefore, the nature that God has given all mankind, and the circumstances he has placed them all in, lead all, in all ages throughout the habitable world, into moral government. And the Creator doubtless intended this for the preservation of this highest species of creatures that he has made; otherwise he has made much less provision for the defence and preservation of this species, than of any other species. There is no kind of creature that he hath made, that he has left without proper means for its own preservation. Every creature is some way furnished for this. But unless man's own reason, to be improved in moral rule and order, be the means he has provided for the preservation of man, he has provided him with no means at all. Therefore, it is doubtless the original design of the Creator, that there should be such a kind of thing as moral subordination amongst men, and that he designed there should be heads, princes or governors, to whom honor, subjection and obedience should be paid. Now, this strongly argues, that the Creator himself will maintain a moral government over the whole several ways:

1. Without this, the preservation of the species is but very imperfectly provided for. If men have nothing but human government to be a restraint upon their lusts, and have no rule or judgment of a universal omniscient governor to be a restraint upon their consciences, still they are left in a most woful condition, and the preservation and common benefit of the species, according to its necessities, and the exigencies of its place, nature, and circumstances in the creation, is in no wise provided for, as the preservation and necessities of other species are.

2. As the Creator has made it necessary, that there should be some of our fellow-creatures that should have rule over us, he has therein so ordered it, that some of them should have some image of his own disposing power over others. (For, as was shown before, God has the disposing power of the whole world.) Now, is it reasonable to think, that the Creator would so constitute the circumstances of mankind, that some particular persons, that have only a little image and shadow of his greatness and power over men, should exercise it, in giving forth edicts, and executing judgment; and that he who is above all, and the original of all, should exercise no power in this way himself, when mankind stand in so much more need of such an exercise of his power, than of the power of human governors?

3. He has infinitely the greatest right to exercise the power of a moral governor, if he pleases. His relation to man as his Creator, most naturally leads to it. He is infinitely the most worthy of that respect, honor and subjection that is due to a moral governor. He has infinitely the best qualifications of a governor, being infinitely wise, powerful and holy, and his government will be infinitely the most effectual to answer the ends of government.

4. It is manifest, that the Creator of the world, in constituting human moral governments among men, has, in that constitution, had great respect to those qualifications, and that relation, and those rights and obligations, in those that he has appointed to be rulers, and in putting others under their moral government, which he has in himself in a vastly more eminent degree. As particularly, in family government, or the government of parents over their children which of all other kinds of human moral government is most evidently founded in nature, and which the preservation of the species doth most immediately require, and most naturally and directly lead to. Here God hath set those to be moral rulers, that are the wiser and stronger, and that are the causes of

other beings, and that are their preservers, and that provide for them; and has appointed those to be in subjection that are less knowing and weaker, and have received being from their rulers, and are dependent and are preserved and maintained. Would not he therefore maintain moral government himself over mankind, who is their universal father, is the author of all their beings, is their universal preserver, and maintains all, and provides all with food and raiment, and all the necessaries and enjoyments of life, and is infinitely wiser and stronger than they? Would not he maintain a moral government over men, who need his government, as children need the government of their parents, and who are no more fit to be left to themselves in the world without his rules, directions, his authority, promises, threatenings and judgment, than children are fit to be left to themselves in a house?

Thirdly, As man is made capable of knowing his Creator, so he is capable of a high esteem of his perfections, his power, and wisdom, and goodness, and capable of loving him, and entertaining great respect for him and for his perfections. He is capable of a proper esteem of God for his wise and excellent and wonderful works, which he beholds; and for their admirable contrivance, which appears in so excellently ordering all things; and of gratitude to him for all the goodness that he himself is the subject of; or, on the contrary, of slighting and despising him, and hating him, finding fault with his works, reproaching him for them, slighting all his goodness which he receives from him; yea, hating him for ordering things in his providence to him as he has done, and cursing and blaspheming him for it.

Now, it is unreasonable to suppose, that God should be an indifferent spectator of these things in his own creature, that he has made in his own image, and made superior to all other creatures, having subjected the rest of the creation to him, and whom he has distinguished from all other creatures, in giving him intelligence, and making him capable of knowing himself; and in a creature that he values above all the rest of the creation, and that he has had more respect to in the creation than to every other species. It cannot be equally agreeable to him, whether he gives him proper esteem, and love, and honor, and gratitude, and pays proper respect to him in his own heart; or on the contrary, unreasonably despises, hates, and curses him. And if he be not an indifferent spectator of these things, then he will not act as a perfectly indifferent spectator, and wholly let men alone, and order things in no respect differently for those ends one way or other. But so it must be, if God maintains no moral government over mankind.

Fourthly, As man is made capable of knowing his Creator, so he is capable of knowing his will in many things, i. e., he is capable of knowing his ends in this and the other works of his, which he beholds. For it is this way principally that he comes to know there is a God, even by seeing the final causes of things; by seeing that such and such things are plainly designed and contrived for such and such ends; and therefore he is capable of either complying with the will of his Creator, or opposing it He is capable of falling in with God's ends, and what he sees his Creator aim at, and co-operating with him, or of setting himself against the Creator's designs. His will may be contrary; as, for instance, it is manifest that it is the Creator's design, that parents should nourish their children, and that children should be subject to their parents.

If a man therefore should murder his children, or if children should rise up and murder their parents, they would oppose the Creator's aims. So if men use the several bodily organs to quite contrary purposes to those for which they were

given, and if men use the faculties of their own minds to ends quite contrary to those they were fitted for (for doubtless they were given and fitted for some end or other), so he may use that dominion over the creatures that the Creator has given him, against the ends to which they were given. For, however far we suppose man may be from being capable of properly frustrating his Creator, yet he is capable of showing that his will is contrary to his Creator's ends. He may oppose his Creator in his will; he may dislike God's ends, and seek others. Now, the Creator cannot be an indifferent spectator of this; for it is a contradiction to suppose, that opposition to his will and aims should be as agreeable to him in itself, as complying with his will. And if he is not an indifferent spectator, then he will not act as such, and so he must maintain a moral government over mankind.

This argument is peculiarly strong, as it respects man's being capable of falling in with, or opposing God's ends in his own creation, and his endowing of him with faculties above the rest of the world. It is exceeding manifest concerning mankind, that God must have made them for some end; not only as it is evident that God must have made the world in general for some end, and as man is an intelligent, voluntary agent; but as it is especially manifest *from fact*, that God has made mankind for some special end. For, it is apparent, in fact, that God has made the inferior parts of the world for some end, and that the special end he made them for, is to subserve the benefit of mankind. Therefore, above all, may it be argued, that God has made mankind for some end. If an artificer accomplishes some great piece of workmanship, very complicated, and with a vast variety of parts, but the whole is so contrived and connected together, that there is some particular part which all the other parts have respect to, and are to subserve, we should well conclude that the workman had some special design to serve by that part, and that his peculiar aim in the whole, was what he intended should be obtained by that part. Now man, the principal part of the creation, is capable of knowing his Creator, and is capable of discerning God's ends in the formation of other things; therefore, doubtless, since God discovers to him the ends for which he has made other things, it would be very strange if he should not let him know the end for which he himself is made, or for which he had such distinguishing faculties given him, whereby he is set above other parts of the creation. Therefore, in the use of his own faculties, he must either fall in with the known design of the Creator in giving them, or thwart it. He must either co-operate with his Creator, as complying with the end of his own being, or wittingly set himself as his enemy. This the Creator cannot be an indifferent spectator of; and, therefore, by what was said before, will not act as an indifferent spectator of, and so must maintain moral government over mankind.

Fifthly, It may be argued, that it must be that God maintains a moral government over the world of mankind, from this, that the special end of the being of mankind is something wherein he has to do with his Creator; some business wherein he is especially concerned with God. The special end of the brute creation is something wherein they are concerned with men. But man's special end is some improvement or use of his faculties towards God. First, I would show the truth of this, and then would show the consequence.

And, as to the truth of this assertion, the following things make it manifest.

1. The special end for which God made mankind, is something very diverse and very superior to those ends for which he made any part of the inferior creation; because God has made man very different from them. He has

vastly distinguished him in the nature that he has given him, the faculties with which he has endowed him, and the place he has set him in the creation. Now, if he has made man for nothing different from what he has made other creatures, then he hath thus done in vain.

2. Man's special end does not respect any other parts of the visible creation. All these are below him, and all, as we observed before, are made for him, to be subservient to his use. Their special end respects him; but his special end does not respect them. For, in the first place, this is unreasonable in itself: if they are in their formation and end subordinated to him, and subjected to him, then the Maker set a greater value on him than them, and gives them to him, and for him, to be spent for him; and therefore he has not made him for them. For that would be to suppose them most valuable in the eyes of their Maker. And, secondly, it is manifest in fact that the being of mankind does not subserve to the benefit of the inferior creatures, any farther than is just necessary to turn them to his own use, and spend them in it.

We may add to this, that the special end of man does not only respect him as consisting in his own happiness as separate from God, and as having nothing to do with him, or in his own happiness consisting in the enjoyments of the visible world. The happiness of the greater part of mankind, in their worldly enjoyments, is not great enough or durable enough to prove such a supposition, as that the end of all things in the whole visible universe is only that happiness. Therefore, nothing else remains, no other supposition is possible, but that man's special end, or that which he is made for, respects the Creator, or is something wherein he has immediately to do with his Creator.

3. If God has made men above other creatures, with capacities superior to them, for some special end, for which other creatures are not made, that special end must be something peculiar to them, for which they are capacitated and fitted by those superior faculties. Now, the greatest thing that men are capacitated for, by their faculties, more than the beasts, is that they are capable of having intercourse with their Creator, as intelligent and voluntary agents. They are capable of knowing him, and capable of esteeming and loving him, and capable of receiving instructions and commands from him, and capable of obeying and serving him, if he be pleased to give commands and make a revelation of his mind. What business or enjoyment, in any measure so distinguishing and peculiar, are men capacitated for, by their superior faculties, as this? Indeed, there is nothing material that is entirely peculiar, and in its nature distinguished. Men could have done as well, and better for such things, and have been beasts or birds. It is a vast difference that God has made between some of his creatures and others; that he has made one kind capable of knowing himself, and so of loving and serving him and enjoying him. Surely this is not without some end. He that has done nothing in the inferior world in vain, has not given man this capacity in vain. The sun has not its light given it without a final cause; and shall we suppose that mankind has this light of the knowledge of their Creator, without a final cause?

Thus it is evident, that the special end for which God has made man, is something wherein he has intercourse with his Creator, as an intelligent, voluntary agent. Hence the consequence is certain, that mankind are subject to God's moral government. For there can be no such thing maintained as a communication between God and man, as between intelligent, voluntary agents, without moral government. For, in maintaining communication or converse, one must yield to the other, must comply with the other; there must be union of wills; one must be clothed with authority, the other with sub

mission If God has made man to converse with himself, he is not indifferent how he is conversed with. One manner of man's behavior towards him, must be agreeable to his will, and another not; and therefore God cannot act as indifferent in this matter. He cannot let man alone, to behave toward him just as he pleases; therefore there must be moral government. God cannot be indifferent, whether in that intercourse between him and man, that he has made mankind for, he is respected and honored, or is condemned and hated Now, as the consequence of the whole, I would infer two things:

1. A future state of rewards and punishments. For unless there be such a state, it will certainly follow that God, in fact, maintains no moral government over the world of mankind. For, otherwise, it is apparent that there is no such thing as rewarding or punishing mankind, according to any visible rule, or, indeed, according to any order or method whatsoever. Without this there may be desires manifested, but there can be no proper laws established, and no authority maintained. Nothing is more manifest, than that in this world there is no such thing as a regular, equal disposing of rewards and punishments of men according to their moral estate. There is nothing in God's disposals toward men in this world, to make his distributive justice and judicial equity manifest or visible, but all things are in the greatest confusion. Often the wicked prosper, and are not in trouble as other men. They become mighty in power; yea, it has commonly been so in all ages, that they have been uppermost in the world. They have the ascendant over the righteous. They are mounted on thrones; while the righteous remain in cottages. And, in this world, the cause of the just is not vindicated. Many wicked men have the righteous in their power, and trample them under foot, and become their cruel persecutors: and the righteous are oppressed, and suffer all manner of injuries and cruelties; while the wicked live and reign in great glory and prosperity.

What has been said, does invincibly argue a divine revelation. And that, *First*, Because if God maintains a moral government over mankind, then there must be rewards and punishments. But these sanctions must be declared: for instance, the punishments which enforce God's laws must be made known. To suppose that God keeps up an equal, perfect moral government over the world of mankind, and yet leaves men wholly at a loss about the nature, manner, degree, time, place, and continuance of their punishment, or leaves it only to their guesses, or for them to argue it out from the nature of things, as well as they can, and every one to make his judgment according as his notions shall guide him, is a very unreasonable supposition. If moral government be maintained, the order and method of government must be visible; otherwise, it loses the nature of moral government. There may be a powerful disposal, as inanimate, unintelligible things are the subjects of God's government, in a visible and established order; but no moral government. The order of government serves to maintain authority, and to influence and rule the subject morally, no farther than it is visible. *Secondly*, The notion of a moral government, of a moral head over intelligent, voluntary agents, or of a prince, a lawgiver, and judge over such subjects, without a revelation or declaration of the mind of the head by his word, or some voluntary sign or signification, in the whole of it is absurd. If God maintains moral government over a society of intelligent creatures, doubtless there must be a revelation. How absurd is it to suppose, that there should be converse and moral government maintained between the head and subjects, when both are intelligent, voluntary agents, without a voluntary communication of minds and expressions, thoughts and inclinations, between the head and the members of the society!

It need not be looked upon as any objection to men's remaining in being

after the death of their bodies, that the beasts that are made for man cease to be when they die. For it is manifest, in fact, that man is the end of the rest of the creatures in this lower world. This world, with all the parts of it, inanimate, vegetative, and sensitive, was made for a habitation for man during his present state: and if man be the end of the rest of the creatures, for which the rest were made, and to whose use they are subordinated, then man is all; he is *instar omnium*. The end of all is equivalent to the whole. Therefore there is no need of any thing else to be preserved; nothing is lost; no part is in vain. If the end of all be preserved, all is preserved: because he is all, the rest is only for his occasional use. The beasts subserve to man's use in the present state; and then, though they cease, yet their end is obtained, and their good, which is their end, remains still in man. Though the tent that was set up for man to sojourn in during his state of probation, ceases when that occasion is over, surely that is no argument that the inhabitant ceases too.

And that the beasts are made for man, affords a good positive argument for a future state of man's existence. For that all other creatures in this lower world are made for man, and that he himself should be made for no more than they, viz., a short continuance in this world, to enjoy the good things of it, is unreasonable

§ 2. The natural world, which is in such continual labor, as is described in the first chapter of Ecclesiastes, constantly going round in such revolutions, will doubtless come to an end. These revolutions are not for nothing. There is some great event and issue of things that this labor is for; some grand period aimed at. Does God make the world restless, to move and revolve in all its parts, to make no progress? To labor with motions so mighty and vast, only to come to the same place again? to be just where it was before? Doubtless some end is nearer approached to by these revolutions. Some great end is nearer to an accomplishment, after a thousand revolutions are finished, than when there was only one finished; or before the first revolution began. The sun does not go round day after day, and year after year, for no other end, but only to come to the same place again, from whence it was first set out, and to bring the world to the same state that it was in before. The waters of the sea are not so restless, continually to ascend into the heavens, and then descend on the earth, and then return to the sea again, only that things may be as they were before. One generation of men does not come, another go, and so continually from age to age, only that at last there may be what there was at first, viz., mankind upon earth The wheels of God's chariot, after they have gone round a thousand times, do not remain just in the same place that they were in at first, without having carried the chariot nearer to a journey's end. We see it is not so in the minuter parts of the creation, that are systems by themselves, as the world is a great system, and where the revolutions very much resemble those in the great system; as in this body of man and other animals. The reciprocation of the heart and lungs, and the circulation of the blood, and the continual circular labors of all parts of the system, are not to last always; they tend to a journey's end.

Coroll. 1. This is a confirmation of a future state. For, if these revolutions have not something in another state that is to succeed this that they are subservient to, then they are in vain. If any thing of this world is to remain, after the revolutions of this world are at an end, doubtless it will be that part of this world, that is the head of all the rest; or that creature for which all the rest is made; and that is man. For if he wholly ceases, and is extinct, it is as if the whole were totally extinct: because he is the end of all. He is that creature, to serve whom the labors and revolutions of this world are, and whom they affect; and therefore, if he does not remain after the revolutions

have ceased, then no end is obtained by all these revolutions: because nothing abides as the fruit of them after they are finished. But all comes to no more than just what was before any of these revolutions, or before this world itself began, viz., a universal nonexistence; all is extinct; all is as if the world had never been; and therefore all has been in vain; for nothing remains as the fruit. He that is carried in the chariot, does not remain after he is brought with so much labor and vast ado to the end of his journey; but ceases to be, as the chariot itself does.

Coroll. 2. This confirms the divinity of the Christian revelation; which gives this account of things, that this world is to come to an end; it is to be dissolved; that the revolutions of the world have an appointed period; and that man, the end of this lower world, is to remain in being afterwards; and gives a most rational account of the great period, design, and issue of all things, worthy of the infinite wisdom and majesty of God.

§ 3. Some part of the world, viz., that which is the highest, the head, and the end of the rest, must be of eternal duration, even the intelligent, reasonable creatures. For, if these creatures, the head and end of all the rest of the creation, come to an end, and be annihilated, it is the same thing as if the whole were annihilated. And if the world be of a temporary duration, and then drops into nothing, it is in vain, i. e., no end is obtained worthy of God. There is nobody but what will own, that if God had created the world, and then it had dropped into nothing the next minute, it would have been in vain; no end could be obtained worthy of God. And the only reason is, that the end would have been so small, by reason of the short continuance of the good obtained by it: it is infinitely little: and so it is still infinitely little, if it stands a million of ages, and then drops into nothing. That is as a moment in the sight of God. If the good obtained by the creation of the world be of so long continuance, it is equally small, when we compare it with God, as one moment. It is, in comparison of him, absolutely equivalent to nothing, and therefore an end not worthy of him. No end is worthy of an infinite God, but an infinite end; and therefore the good obtained must be of infinite duration. If it be not so, who shall fix the bounds? Who shall say a million years is long enough? And if it be, who shall say a good of a thousand years' continuance does not become the wisdom of God? And if it does, how can we say but that a good of still shorter continuance would not answer the ends of wisdom? If it would, who can say that the sovereignty of God shall not fix on a good of a minute's continuance as sufficient; which is as great in comparison with him as a million years? The only reason why a good of a minute's continuance is not great enough to become the Creator of the world, is, that it is a good so little, when compared with him. And the same reason stands in equal force against a good of any limited duration whatsoever.

§ 4. Besides those texts in the Old Testament, that do directly speak of a future state, the Old Testament affords the following evidences and confirmations of a future state, especially Solomon's writings, and, above all, the book of Ecclesiastes.

1*st*. It is often declared in the Old Testament, that God will bring every work into judgment; that there is verily a God that judgeth in the earth; that his eyes are on the ways of men; that he considers all his goings: that the sins of the wicked, and the good deeds of the righteous, are exactly observed, and written in a book of remembrance, and none of them forgotten; that they are sealed up in a bag, and laid up among God's treasures; and that he will render to every man according to his works: that the Judge of all the earth

will do right; and that therefore God will not destroy the righteous with the wicked: that as to the righteous, it shall be well with him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings; that as to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him; that it is impossible it should be otherwise; that there is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves from God the Judge; that God cannot forget his people; that a woman may sooner forget her sucking child; that God has graven them on the palms of his hands; that God beholds and takes notice of all their afflictions, and pities them, as a father pitieth his children; but that he is the enemy of wicked men; that their sins shall find them out; that though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished; that the way of righteousness is a certain way to happiness, and the way of sin a sure way to misery. Solomon himself is more abundant than all other penmen of the Old Testament, in observing the difference between the righteous and the wicked in this respect, the greatness and the certainty of that difference. See Prov. i. 31, 32; and ii. 11, 21, 22; and iii. 2, 4, 8, 13—18, 21,—26, 32, 35; iv. 5—13, 22; viii. 17—21, 35, 36; ix. 5, 6, 11, 12; x. 16, 17, 27, 28, 29; xi. 7, 8, 18, 19, 21, 30, 31; xii. 2, 3, 14, 21, 28; xiii. 9, 13, 14, 15, 21; xiv. 19, 26, 27; xv. 3, 6, 24; xvi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; xix. 23; xxi. 15, 16, 18, 21; xxii. 4, 8; xxiii. 17, 18; xxiv. 1—5, 12, 15,16, 19—22; xxviii. 10, 13, 14, 18; xxix. 6; and in many other places in the book of Proverbs. And, in Ecclesiastes xii. 13, 14, Solomon declares, "That to fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man: because God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." And chap. ii. 26, he says, "God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy; but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God." And chap. iii. 17, "I said in my heart God will judge the righteous and the wicked." And chap. v. 8, "If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they." And yet the same wise man, in this book of Ecclesiastes, says, chap. vi. 8, "What hath the wise more than the fool? What hath the poor that knoweth to walk before the living?" And elsewhere in this book, particularly observes, "That all things come alike to all; and there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; and as dieth the wise man, so the fool," &c. These things are most palpably and notoriously inconsistent, unless there be a future state. In Eccles. viii. 13, the wise man says, "There is a vanity which is done upon earth, that there be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked. Again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous." And yet in the same breath, in the two foregoing verses, he speaks with the utmost peremptoriness, that God will surely make a vast difference between the righteous and the wicked; so that he will make one happy and the other miserable; and that it never can in any instance be otherwise, yea, that it will not finally prove otherwise in those instances wherein it seems most to be otherwise, and wherein God seems to be most unmindful of the provocations of the wicked, and of the righteousness of them that fear God. "Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him. But it shall not be well with the wicked; neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow, because he feareth not before God." And, in the beginning of the next chapter, "The righteous and the wise and their works are in

the hands of God. No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them All things come alike to all. There is one event to the righteous and the wicked." Now, if both these seemingly opposite assertions are true, then it is true there is a future state. The wise man observes, that the righteous sentence of the Judge, who will surely make so great a difference between the righteous and the wicked, is not executed in this world; on which account wicked men are greatly emboldened to sin; as he observes in the same place, chap. viii. 11, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." And therefore, there is some other time, besides the time of this life, for executing the sentence which he observes will so surely be executed. In the 12th and 13th verses it is said, "Though a sinner's days be prolonged, yet he shall not prolong his days, which are as a shadow." How can both these be true, but in this sense, that though his life be prolonged in this world, yet the longest life here is short, and is but a shadow; and when he dies he perishes, his life and happiness shall not be prolonged beyond this momentary state, as those of the righteous will be. So he says, chap. vii. 15, "There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness; and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness." And yet, in two or three verses before, verse 12, he observes, that it is a peculiar excellency of wisdom, wherein it differs from riches and all other things, that are an uncertain defence to a man, that wisdom gives life to them who have it. And also, in two or three verses after, he advises to hold this fast as an unfailing truth, verse 18, "That he that fears God, shall come forth out of all destruction and calamity." And chapter viii. 5, he says, "Whoso keepeth the commandments shall feel no evil thing." And therefore, it must be some other life that is meant, besides this temporal life, which he observes is sometimes prolonged in wicked men; and, with regard to which, righteous men sometimes perish in their righteousness; and, with regard to which, there is one event to wise men and fools; as in chapter ii. 14, 15, 16, "The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness. And I myself perceived that one event happened unto them all. Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise?" "And how dieth the wise man? as the fool." Compare these things with Prov. xii. 28, "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof is no death." And chapter xiii. 14, "The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Chapter iii. 18, "She is a tree of life to them who lay hold on her, and happy is every one that obtaineth her." Verse 22, "So shall they be life to thy soul," Chapter iv. 22, "They are life to those who find them." And chapter x. 17, "He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction." And xi. 30, "The fruit of righteousness is a tree of life;" xiv. 27, "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death;" xvi. 22, "Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him who hath it." Chapter xxi. 21, "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy, findeth life and righteousness and honor." So chapter xxii. 4, "By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches and honor and life." Chapter iv. 4, "Keep my commandments and live." So Eccles. vii. 2, and chapter ix. 2, "Forsake the foolish and live." In chapter v. 5, it is said, "Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands?" signifying the dreadful danger of false swearing and breach of vows. And yet, as to what happens in this life, it is said, that all things come alike to all, and that there is

one event to the righteous and to the wicked; "And as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath." In chapter v. 8, it is signified, that there is a remedy from the wrong, injustice, and oppression of men in power, by the judgment of the Supreme Judge. The same is signified in chapter iii. 16, 17. And yet what is said, chapter iv. 1, 2, implies, that often in this case there is no remedy in this life: "So I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and beheld the tears of such as were oppressed; and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power: but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead that are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive." In Prov x. 7, Solomon says, the memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot. And of this memory or good name of the just, he says (Eccles. vii. 1), that "it is better than precious ointment (meaning the precious ointment they were wont to anoint the children of great and rich men with when first born); and that, upon this account, the day of a godly man's death (followed with a good name, and so a blessed memory) is better than the day of one's birth." And yet the same wise man says, Eccles. ii 16, "There is no remembrance of the wise man more than of the fool; seeing that which now is, in the days to come shall be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool." By which it is evident, that it is with regard to something that follows death in another world, and not any thing in this world, that the death of the righteous is thus preferred to the death of the wicked; on the account of the blessed memory and good name of the righteous, and the rotten stinking name of the wicked. Again, in chapter vi. 3, 4, an untimely birth is said to be better than one who lives in great prosperity, if he have no burial, and his name be covered with darkness; implying, that he is in a worse state after death, for having no burial, and his name covered with darkness. And yet it will follow, that he is neither the worse nor the better, for any thing done in this world to his corpse or his name, after he is dead. I say it will follow, from what is observed, chapter ix. 5, 6, "The dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a portion forever in any thing that is done under the sun." Chapter iii. 22, "There is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" So chapter vi. 12. By which it is evident, that by burial, and the name of the deceased person, are meant something diverse from any thing that remains, or is brought to pass in this world.

Balaam says, "Let me die the death of the righteous; let my last end be like his: implying, that there is something in their death vastly preferable to the death of the wicked. And the Psalmist, Psal. xxxvii. 37, 38, says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off." Psalm xxvi. 9, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men." Prov. x. 25, "As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation." And Prov. xi. 7, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth." And chapter xiv. 32, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." Thus it is abundantly represented, as if there were a vast difference between the righteous and the wicked. And yet it is declared, that as to any thing pertaining to this world there is no difference. Eccles. ii. 16, "How dieth the wise man? as the fool." Compare Psalm xlix. 10. And although Solomon says, in Prov. xi 7, that "when a wicked man dieth, his expectation and hope perish," as if this were

peculiar to wicked men; yea, he says expressly, chapter xiv. 32, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death:" yet the same wise man, after observing that there is one event to the righteous and wicked, both in life and in death, Eccles. ix. 3, in the next verses proceeds to say, that to him that is joined to all the living, there is *hope;* intimating there is no more hope for him, whether he be righteous or wicked, after he is dead; i. e, as to any good in this world, which is plainly his meaning; for he, in the following words, proceeds to observe, that "they have no more a portion forever of any thing that is done under the sun." And though it be so often, in these writings of Solomon, observed to be the peculiar excellency of wisdom and righteousness, that it delivers from death, and gives life and length of days, and makes the years of life many; and though he does abundantly set forth the great peace, comfort, pleasure, profit and satisfaction, and exceeding gain, excellent advantage, and good reward of wisdom and virtue; so that it is worth the while to get it by all means; with all our gettings, to buy it and sell it not; and that they that obtain it are happy, yea exceeding happy: yet this same wise man does in effect tell us, that by *life* he does not mean this present life; and that the profit, gain, and happiness he speaks of, is no good of a temporal nature. For as to this life, and all the good that belongs to it, at best, he says, all is vanity and vexation of spirit, and that there is no profit under the sun. Compare Eccles. ii. 11, with the preceding part of the book. And he there plainly shows that he means that it is thus, both with respect to wise men and fools, righteous and wicked, verses 14, 15, 16; and then he tells us that he esteemed life in this sense, even the present life, with the best it had, worse than nothing; verse 17, "Therefore I hated life." And declares that he judges, that for any good in this life, death is better than life, and that they are most happy who have never yet received life; Eccles. iv. 2, 3, "Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive Yea, better is he, than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun." In chapter ii. 20, 21, 22, he speaks expressly of the life of a righteous man, whose labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; and says of it, What hath he of all his labor? And that all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief: and that a man may well despair as to any happiness or real profit in this life. He declares, that long life in this world is so far from being so exceeding a felicity, that if a man should live a thousand years twice told, yet there is no good or benefit in it all: and that the wise in this respect has no more than the fool. Eccles. vi. 6, 7, 8. And that if a man here hath long life, and continual prosperity through the whole of it, it is all worth nothing: Eccles. xi. 8, "But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, all that cometh is vanity." And chapter vi. 12 this whole life is called a vain life. The wise man in this book of Ecclesiastes, does greatly recommend it to his readers to fear God; Eccles. iii. 14; chap. viii. 12; chap. xii. 13. And to fear him as a Judge that will bring every work into judgment; chap. xii. 13, 14; chap. xi 9, 10. And yet if there be no other life but this, he in effect tells us all over this book, we have nothing to fear, no punishment from the Judge, no calamity in a way of displeasing him, any more than in a way of doing what is well pleasing in his sight.

It is an argument that the Scriptures of the Old Testament afford for a future state, that it is so often observed in those sacred writings, as a thing very remarkable, that man should be mortal, that in this respect he should be like the beasts that perish, and like the flowers, and grass of the field: Psal.

xlix. 10, 11, 12, "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue forever;—nevertheless man being in honor abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish." And verses 19, 20, "He shall go to the generation of his fathers. They shall never see light. Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish." Why should it be taken notice of as something remarkable, that man should be mortal, and die as the beasts do, if there be nothing in the nature and circumstances of man, by which he is distinguished from the beasts, that would naturally lead one to expect an answerable distinction in this respect? If it be no more than is to be expected, considering man's nature, capacity, state in the world, business, the end of his creation, his views, and natural desires; I say, if, considering these things, there is nothing in man that should lead us any more to expect, that man should be immortal, than the beasts, or that should make it any more wonderful or remarkable, that men should die, than that the inferior creatures should die; then why is such a remark made upon it? And, besides, it is plainly signified, that man's superior nature and circumstances to the beasts, or his being in honor, does require, or naturally lead us to expect, that man should be distinguished in this respect from the beasts. For that is mentioned as the thing that renders it remarkable, that man should die as the beasts, that he is in honor.

The words of Solomon are very emphatical, Ecclesiastes iii. 18, 19, 20: "I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them; that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea they have all one breath. So that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity; all go to one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." This would not be spoken with so much emphasis, as a thing very remarkable and difficult to conceive of, if there was nothing in it indeed wonderful, nothing pertaining to the nature which God had given mankind, or the state he had set them in, leading one to expect, that man should differ from the beasts in this; nothing that should make it appear congruous and fit, that God should make men, unless under his remarkable displeasure, to be distinguished from the inferior creatures by immunity from death; and that he should enjoy eternal life. And, if it be so, then we may determine, that there is great reason to suppose, that there is some way that good men shall be delivered from death, and that they shall enjoy eternal life in some invisible world after death. For good men are spoken of abundantly in the Old Testament, as fully in favor with God, having all their sins perfectly done away, as if they had never been, and as being very dear and precious in God's sight; that God greatly delights in them: and the bestowment of life is abundantly spoken of as the excellent fruit of his distinguishing love and favor. And the durableness of the benefits of his favor is often spoken of as a proper testimony of the greatness of it; their being more durable than the everlasting mountains, yea than heaven and earth; Psalm cii. latter end—Isaiah li. 6, chap. liv. 10. And it cannot answer the design of those great declarations of God's favor, that although particular saints shall die, yet a succession of them shall be continued, and their posterity shall last. For, if there be no future state, then they are never the better for what happens to their posterity or successors after their death, as is often observed in the Old Testament, and especially in the book of Ecclesiastes.

If God has perfectly forgiven all the sins of the righteous, and they are so

high in his favor; and if the great evidence of this favor be the durableness of the benefits that are the fruits of it, and the chief fruit of it is life; then it is at least to be expected, that they will escape that mortality which is such a remarkable disgrace to those that have the human nature, and so wonderful to behold in those whom the *Most High* has made to differ so much from the beasts in capacity, dignity, end and design. We might surely expect, that these high favorites should, with regard to life and durableness of happiness, not be mere beasts, and have no pre-eminence above them; and that they should not be like the grass, and the flower of the field, which in the morning flourisheth and groweth up, but in the evening is cut down and withered; that all their happiness and all the benefits of God's favor should not be like a shadow, like a dream, like a tale that is told; that it should not be as a span, and should not pass away as the swift ships, as the eagle that hasteth to the prey; that it should not be swifter than a weaver's shuttle;—to which things the life of man is compared in Scripture.

The things of this world are spoken of as having no profit or value, because they are not lasting, but must be left at death, and therefore are mere vanity (i. e., wholly worthless), and not worthy that any man should set his heart on them, Psalm xlix. 6 to the end, Prov. xxiii. 4, 5, chap. xi. 7, Ecclesiastes ii. 15, 16, 17, chap. iii., ten first verses, verse 19, chap. v. 14, 15, 16. But the rewards of righteousness are abundantly represented as exceedingly valuable and worthy that men should set their hearts upon them, because they are lasting, Prov. iii. 16, viii. 18, and x. 25, 27, Isaiah lv. 3, Psalm i. 3 to the end, Isaiah xvii. 7, 8, and innumerable other places. How can these things consist one with another, unless there be a future state?

It is spoken of as a remarkable thing, and what one would not expect, that good men should die as wicked men do, as it seems to be, by good men's dying a temporal death as wicked men do, Eccles. ii. 16, chap. ix. 3, 4, 5. And therefore, it may be argued, that it does but seem to be so; but that in reality it shall not be so, inasmuch as, though good men die a temporal death as wicked men do, yet, as to their happiness, they die not, but live forever in a future state. It is an evidence of a future state, that in the Old Testament so many promises are made to the godly, of things that shall be after they are dead, which shall be testimonies of God's great favor to them, and blessed rewards of his favor; so many promises concerning their name, and concerning their posterity, and the future church of God in the world; and yet that we are so much taught in the Old Testament that men are never the better for what comes to pass after they are dead, concerning these things (i. e., if we look only at the present life, without taking any other state of existence into consideration), Job xiv. 21, Eccles. i. ii. iii. 22, and ix. 5, 6. Yea, the wise man says expressly, that the dead have no more of a reward, i. e., in any thing in this world, Eccles. ix. 5.

That man shall die as a beast, seems to be spoken of, Eccles. iii. 16 to the end, as a vanity, an evil, a kind of mischief and confusion, that appears in the world. Therefore this is an argument, that God, the wise orderer of all things, who brings order out of confusion, will rectify this disorder by appointing a future state.

These representations of the Old Testament, wherein the life of man is set forth as being so exceedingly short, as a flower, as a shadow, as a dream, a tale that is told, as a span, a moment, &c., have no propriety at all in them any other way, than as man's life is short, in a comparative view, compared with things pertaining to men, that would naturally lead us to expect that it should be incomparably longer; such as the dignity of man's nature above all other

creatures, his being made in the image of God, his being of a capacity so much superior, his being made for such an end and business, and capable of such happiness, made capable of looking forward and having some comprehension of an endless life, his necessary desires of such a life, &c. Otherwise, why is not the shortness of the duration of other things in like manner set forth and insisted on, which do not last longer than the life of man? But if it be so indeed, that man's life is exceedingly short, considering his nature, end, capacity and desires, then doubtless the righteous, who are represented as the high favorites of God, who shall be the subjects of his blessings every way, and particularly shall have *life* as the great fruit of his favor and blessing, will have a life, or duration, that shall be long, answerably to their nature, desires, &c.

It is an argument that the Old Testament affords for the proof of a future life and immortality, that we are there taught, that mortality is brought in by sin, and comes as a punishment of sin. Therefore, it is natural to suppose, that when complete forgiveness is promised, and perfect restoration to favor, and deliverance from death, and the bestowment of life, as the fruit of this favor, eternal life and immortality is intended.

§ 5. That the state of divine judgment and retribution is hereafter, in another life, and not in this, is manifest from this, that some of the highest acts of virtue consist in dying well, in denying ourselves of life in a good cause, for God, and a good conscience, or rather than commit what is in itself vicious and vile; for our country, for the church of God, and the interest of that holy society.

§ 6. Isaiah chap. xxxviii. 18, 19, "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy truth." —"The living, the living he shall praise thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known thy truth." The death that is here spoken of, is death indeed, or is properly so called. The state of death is here spoken of as it is originally, and as being still, a state of death, and not as it is changed by a redemption from a state of death to a state of life. Hezekiah speaks of that death wherein men do really die, or are fully dead, and not that improperly so called, wherein men are a thousand times more alive than they were before, and are immortal, and beyond the possibility of dying. Death, as it is originally, and when it is properly death, is a state wherein men cannot "praise God," nor "celebrate him," nor "hope for his truth." It is a state of evil without any good. It is, as Job says, "the land of darkness, as darkness itself, and the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." It is a state wherein there is no good done, no good enjoyed, no good hoped for. It is a state of absolute emptiness of any good, act or principle, happiness or hope. They that are in hell, are in such a state of death. Such was death originally; such was death as it was threatened to our first parents; and very commonly, when death is spoken of in the Old Testament, it is in this notion of it. For the change of a state of death into a state of more glorious life, was not fully revealed under the Old Testament. Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel. It is under this notion death seems to be spoken of in Eccles ix. 4, 5, 6, where it is said, that "a living dog is better than a dead lion;" and that "the dead have no more a reward;" and that "they have no more a portion forever of any thing that is done under the sun." Hezekiah did not mean, that they that are redeemed from the power of the grave, they that get the victory over death, and shall never die (as Christ promises believers), "shall not praise God, nor hope for his truth."

We see in this instance, that the better men are, the more terrible would it

make death, if there were no future state. For the better they are, the more they love God. Good men have found the fountain of good. Those men who have a high degree of love to God, do greatly delight in God. They have experience of a much better happiness in life than others; and therefore it must be more dreadful for them to have their beings eternally extinct by death. Thus, this seemed above all other things to be the sting of Hezekiah's affliction in his expectation of death, that he should no more have any opportunity of communion with God, and worshipping and praising him; as appears by these two verses, together with the 11th and 22d verses: "I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the world."—"Hezekiah also said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?" there not being at that time a clear and full revelation of a future state. Hence we may strongly argue a future state: for it is not to be supposed, that God would make man such a creature as to be capable of looking forward beyond death, and capable of knowing and loving him, and delighting in him as the fountain of all good, and should make it his duty so to do, which will necessarily increase in him a dread of annihilation, and an eager desire of immortality; and yet, so order it, that that desire should be disappointed; so that his loving his Creator, should in some sense make him the more miserable.

§ 7. Nothing is more manifest, than that it is absolutely necessary, in order to a man's being thoroughly, universally and steadfastly virtuous, that his mind and heart should be thoroughly weaned from this world; which is a great evidence, that God intends another world for virtuous men. He surely would not require them, in their thoughts, affections and expectations, wholly to relinquish this world, if it were all the world they were to expect: if he had made them for this world wholly and only, and had created the world for them, to be their only country and home, all the resting place ever designed for them.

§ 8. If all the creatures God has made are to come to an end, and the world itself is to come to an end, and so to be as though it had never been, then it will be with all God's glorious and magnificent works. agreeably to what is said of the temporal prosperity of the wicked, Job xx. 6, 7, 8: "Though its excellency be never so great, yet it shall perish forever; it shall all fly away as a dream; it shall be chased away as a vision of the night." It shall vanish totally, and absolutely be as though it had not been

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CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE NECESSITY AND REASONABLENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SATISFACTION FOR SIN.

§ 1. The necessity of satisfaction for sin, and the reasonableness of that Christian doctrine, may appear from the following considerations:

1. Justice requires that sin be punished, because sin deserves punishment. What the demerit of sin calls for, justice calls for; for it is only the same thing in different words. For the notion of a desert of punishment, is the very same as a just connection with punishment. None will deny but that there is such a thing, in some cases, as the desert or demerit of a crime, its calling for, or requiring punishment. And to say that the desert of a crime does require punish-

ment, is just the same thing as to say, the reason why it requires it is, that it deserves it. So that the suitableness of the connection between the crime and the punishment, consists in the desert; and therefore, wherever desert is, there is such suitableness. None will deny that some crimes are so horrid, and so deserving of punishment, that it is requisite that they should not go unpunished, unless something very considerable be done to make up for the crime; either some answerable repentance, or some other compensation, that in some measure at least balances the desert of punishment, and so, as it were, takes it off, or disannuls it: otherwise the desert of punishment remaining, all will allow, that it is fit and becoming, and to be desired, that the crime should be severely punished. And why is it so, but only from the demerit of the crime, or because the crime so much deserves such a punishment? It justly excites so great abhorrence and indignation, that it is requisite there should be a punishment answerable to this abhorrence and indignation that is fitly excited by it. But by this, all is granted that needs to be granted, to show, that desert of punishment carries in it a requisiteness of the punishment deserved. For if greater crimes do very much require punishment, because of their great demerit, lesser crimes will also require punishment, but only in a lesser degree, proportionably to their demerit; because the ground of the requisiteness of the punishment of great crimes, is their demerit. It is requisite that they should be punished, on no other account but because they deserve it.

And besides, if it be allowed that it is requisite that great crimes should be punished with punishment in some measure answerable to the heinousness of the crime, without something to balance them, some answerable repentance or other satisfaction, because of their great demerit, and the great abhorrence and indignation they justly excite; it will follow that it is requisite that God should punish all sin with infinite punishment; because all sin, as it is against God, is infinitely heinous, and has infinite demerit, is justly infinitely hateful to him, and so stirs up infinite abhorrence and indignation in him. Therefore, by what was before granted, it is requisite that God should punish it, unless there be something in some measure to balance this desert; either some answerable repentance and sorrow for it, or other compensation. Now there can be no repentance of it, or sorrow for it, in any measure answerable or proportionable to the heinousness of the demerit of the crime; because that is infinite, and there can be no infinite sorrow for sin in finite creatures; yea, there can be none but what is infinitely short of it; none that bears any proportion to it. Repentance is as nothing in comparison of it, and therefore can weigh nothing when put in the scales with it, and so does nothing at all towards compensating it, or diminishing the desert or requisiteness of punishment, any more than if there were no repentance. If any ask, why God could not pardon the injury on repentance, without other satisfaction, without any wrong to justice; I ask the same person why he could not also pardon the injury without repentance? For the same reason, could he not pardon with repentance without satisfaction? For all the repentance men are capable of, is no repentance at all, or is as little as none, in comparison with the greatness of the injury; for it bears no proportion to it. And it would be as dishonorable and unfit for God to pardon the injury without any repentance at all, as to do it merely on the account of a repentance that bears no more proportion to the injury, than none at all. Therefore, we are not forgiven on repentance, because it in any wise compensates, or takes off, or diminishes the desert or requisiteness of punishment; but because of the respect that evangelical repentance has to compensation already made.

If sin, therefore, deserves punishment, that is the same thing as to say, that

it is fit and proper that it should be punished. If the case be so, that sin deserves punishment from men; in those cases it is proper it should receive punishment from men. A fault cannot be properly said to deserve punishment from any, but those to whom it belongs to inflict punishment when it is deserved. In those cases, therefore, wherein it belongs to men to inflict punishment, it is proper for them to inflict that punishment that is deserved of them.

Again, if sin's desert of punishment be the proper ground of the fitness of its connection with punishment, or rather be that wherein fitness of the connection consists; it will thence follow, not only that it is fit that sin that deserves punishment, should be punished, but also that it should be punished as it deserves.

It is meet that a person's state should be agreeable to the quality of his dispositions and voluntary actions. Suffering is suitable and answerable to the quality of sinful dispositions and actions; it is suitable that they that will evil, and do evil, should receive evil in proportion to the evil that they do or will. It is but justice that it should be so; and when sin is punished, it receives but its own, or that which is suitably connected with it. But it is a contradiction to say that it is suitably connected with punishment, or that it is suitable that it should be connected with it, and yet that it is suitable it should not be connected with it. All sin may be resolved into hatred of God and our neighbor; as all our duty may be resolved into love to God and our neighbor. And it is but meet that this spirit of enmity should receive a turn in its own kind, that it should receive enmity again. Sin is of such a nature, that it wishes ill, and aims at ill to God and man; but to God especially. It strikes at God; it would, if it could, procure his misery and death. It is but suitable, that with what measure it metes, it should be measured to it again. It is but suitable that men should reap what they sow, and that the rewards of every man's hand should be given him. This is what the consciences of all men do naturally declare. There is nothing that men know sooner, after they come to the exercise of their reason, than that, when they have done wickedness, they deserve punishment. The consciences not only of Christians, and those who have been educated in the principles of divine revelation, but also the consciences of heathens inform them of this: therefore, unless conscience has been stupified by frequent violations when men have done wickedness, there remains a sense of guilt upon their minds; a sense of an obligation to punishment. It is natural to expect that which conscience or reason tells them it is suitable should come; and therefore they are afraid and jealous, and ready to flee when no man pursues.

Seeing therefore it is requisite that sin should be punished, as punishment is deserved and just; therefore the justice of God obliges him to punish sin. For it belongs to God, as the Supreme Ruler of the universality of things, to maintain order and decorum in his kingdom, and to see to it that decency and righteousness take place in all cases. That perfection of his nature whereby he is disposed to this, is his justice: therefore his justice naturally disposes him to punish sin as it deserves.

2. The holiness of God, which is the infinite opposition of his nature to sin, naturally and necessarily disposes him to punish sin. Indeed his justice is part of his holiness. But when we speak of God's justice inclining him to punish sin, we have respect only to that exercise of his holiness whereby he loves that holy and beautiful order that consists in the connection of one thing with another, according to their nature, and so between sin and punishment; and his opposition to that which would be so unsuitable as a disconnection of these things. But now I speak of the holiness of God as appearing not directly and

immediately in his hatred of an unsuitable, hateful disconnection between sin and that which is proper for it; but in his hatred of sin itself, or the opposition of his nature to the odious nature of sin.

If God's nature be infinitely opposite to sin, then doubtless he has a disposition answerable to oppose it in his acts and works. If he by his nature be an enemy to sin with an infinite enmity, then he is doubtless disposed to act as an enemy to it, or to do the part of an enemy to it. And if he be disposed naturally to do the part of an enemy against sin, or, which is the same thing, against the faultiness or blameworthiness of moral agents; then it will follow, he is naturally disposed to act as an enemy to those that are the persons faulty and blameworthy, or are chargeable with the guilt of it, as being the persons faulty. Indignation is the proper exercise of hatred of any thing as a fault or thing blamable; and there could be no such thing either in the Creator or creature, as hatred of a fault without indignation, unless it be conceived or hoped that the fault is suffered for, and so the indignation be satisfied. Whoever finds a hatred to a fault, and at the same time imputes the fault to him that committed it, he therein feels an indignation against him for it. So that God, by his necessary infinite hatred of sin, is necessarily disposed to punish it with a punishment answerable to his hatred.

It does not become the Sovereign of the world, a being of infinite glory, purity and beauty, to suffer such a thing as sin, an infinitely uncomely disorder, an infinitely detestable pollution, to appear in the world subject to his government, without his making an opposition to it, or giving some public manifestations and tokens of his infinite abhorrence of it. If he should so do, it would be countenancing it, which God cannot do; for "he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity," Hab. i. 13. It is natural in such a case to expect tokens of the utmost opposition. If we could behold the infinite Fountain of purity and holiness, and could see what an infinitely pure flame it is, and with what a pure brightness it shines, so that the heavens appear impure when compared with it; and then should behold some infinitely odious and detestable filthiness brought and set in its presence; would it not be natural to expect some ineffably vehement opposition made to it? And would not the want of it be indecent and shocking?

If it be to God's glory that he is in his nature infinitely holy and opposite to sin; then it is to his glory to be infinitely displeased with sin. And if it be to God's glory to be infinitely displeased with sin; then it must be to his glory to exercise and manifest that displeasure, and to act accordingly. But the proper exercise and testimony of displeasure against sin, in the Supreme Being and absolute Governor of the world, is taking vengeance. Men may show their hatred of sin by lamenting it, and mourning for it, and taking great pains, and undergoing great difficulties to prevent or remove it, or by approving God's vengeance for it. Taking vengeance is not the proper way of fellow subjects, hatred of sin; but it is in the Supreme Lord and Judge of the world, to whom vengeance belongs; because he has the ordering and government of all things, and therefore the suffering of sin to go unpunished would in him be a conniving at it. Taking vengeance is as much the proper manifestation of God's displeasure at sin, as a mighty work is the proper manifestation of his power, or as a wise work is the proper manifestation of his wisdom. There may be other testimonies of God's displeasedness with and abhorrence of sin, without testifying his displeasure in condign punishment. He might declare he has such a displeasure and abhorrence. So there might be other testimonies of God's power and wisdom, besides a powerful wise effect. He might have declared himself to be infinitely

wise and powerful. But yet there would have been wanting the proper manifestations of God's power and wisdom, if God had only declared himself to be possessed of these attributes. The creatures might have believed him to be all-wise and almighty; but by seeing his mighty and wise works, they see his power and wisdom. So if they had been only a declaration of God's abhorrence and displeasure against sin, the creature might have believed it, but could not have seen it, unless he should also take vengeance for it.

3. The honor of the greatness, excellency and majesty of God's being, requires that sin be punished with an infinite punishment. Hitherto I have spoken of the requisiteness of God's punishing sin, on account of the demerit and hatefulness of it absolutely considered, and not directly as God is interested in the affair. But now, if we consider sin as levelled against God, not only compensative justice to the sinner, but justice to himself, requires that God should punish sin with infinite punishment. Sin casts contempt on the majesty and greatness of God. The language of it is, that he is a despicable being, not worthy to be honored or feared; not so great, that his displeasure is worthy to be dreaded; and that his threatenings of wrath are despicable. Now, the proper vindication of defence of God's majesty in such a case, is, for God to contradict this language of sin, in his providence towards sin that speaks this language, or to contradict the language of sin in the event and fruit of sin. Sin says, God is a despicable being, and not worthy that the sinner should fear him; and so affronts him without fear. The proper vindication of God's majesty from this is, for God to show, by the event, that he is worthy that the sinner should regard him and fear him, by his appearing in the fearful, dreadful event to the person guilty, that he is an infinitely fearful and terrible being. The language of sin is, that God's displeasure is not worthy that the sinner should regard it. The proper vindication of God from this language is, to show by the experience of the event, the infinite dreadfulness of that slighted displeasure. In such a case, the majesty of God requires this vindication. It cannot be properly vindicated without it, neither can God be just to himself without this vindication; unless there could be such a thing as a repentance, humiliation, and sorrow for this, proportionable to the greatness of the majesty despised. When the majesty of God has such contempt cast upon it, and is trodden down in the dust by vile sinners, it is not fit that this infinite and glorious majesty should be left under this contempt; but that it should be vindicated wholly from it; that it should be raised perfectly from the dust wherein it is trodden, by something opposite to the contempt, which is equivalent to it, or of weight sufficient to balance it; either an equivalent punishment, or an equivalent sorrow and repentance. So that sin must be punished with an infinite punishment.

Sin casts contempt on the infinite glory and excellency of God. The language of it is, that God is not an excellent being, but an odious one; and therefore that it is no heinous thing to hate him. Now, it is fit that on this occasion omniscience should declare and manifest that it judges otherwise; and that it should show that it esteems God infinitely excellent; and therefore, that it looks on it as an infinitely heinous thing, to cast such a reflection on God, by infinite tokens of resentment of such a reflection and such hatred.

God is to be considered, in this affair, not merely as the Governor of a world of creatures, to order things between one creature and another, but as the Supreme Regulator and Rector of the universe, the orderer of things relating to the whole compass of existence, including himself; to maintain the rights of the whole, and decorum through the whole, and to maintain his own rights, and the due honor of his own perfections, as well as to preserve justice among

his creatures. It is fit that there should be one that has this office; and this office properly belongs to the Supreme Being. And if he should fail of doing justice to himself in a necessary vindication of his own majesty and glory, it would be an immensely greater failure of his rectoral justice, than if he should deprive the creature (that are beings of infinitely less consequence) of their right.

4. There is a necessity of sin's being punished with a condign punishment, from the law of God that threatens such punishment. All but Epicureans will own, that all creatures that are moral agents, are subjects of God's moral government; and that therefore he has given a law to his creatures. But if God has given a law to his creatures, that law must have sanctions, i. e., it must be enforced with threatenings of punishment: otherwise it fails of having the nature of a law, and is only of the nature of counsel or advice; or rather of a request. For one being to express his inclination or will to another, concerning any thing he would receive from him, any love or respect, without any threatening annexed, but leaving it with the person applied to, whether he will afford it or not, whether he will grant it or not, supposing that his refusal will be with impunity; is properly of the nature of a request. It does not amount to counsel or advice; because, when we give counsel to others, it is for their interest. But when we express our desire or will of something we would receive from them, with impunity to them whether they grant it or not, this is more properly requesting than counselling. No doubt it falls far short of the nature of law-giving. For such an expression of one's will as this, is an expression of will, without any expression of authority. It holds forth no authority, for us merely to manifest our wills or inclinations to another; nor indeed does it exhibit any authority over a person applied to, to promise him rewards. So persons may, and often do, promise rewards to others, for doing those things that they have no power to oblige them to. So may persons do to their equals: so may a king do to others who are not his subjects. This is rather bargaining with others, than giving them laws.

That expression of will only is a law, which is exhibited in such a manner as to express the lawgiver's power over the person to whom it is manifested, expressing his power of disposal of him, according as he complies or refuses; that which shows power over him, so as to oblige him to comply, or to make it be to his cost if he refuses.

For the same reason that it is necessary the divine law should have a threatening of condign punishment annexed, it is also necessary that the threatening should be fulfilled. For the threatening wholly relates to the execution. If it had no connection with execution, it would be wholly void, and would be as no threatening: and so far as there is not a connection with execution, whether that be in a greater or lesser degree; so far and in such a degree is it void, and so far approaches to the nature of no threatening, as much as if that degree of unconnection was expressed in the threatening. As for instance, if sin fails of threatened punishment half the times, this makes void the threatening in one half of it, and brings it down to be no more than if the threatening had expressed only so much, that sin should be punished half the times that it is committed.

But if it be needful that all sin in every act should be forbidden by law, i. e., with a prohibition and threatening of condign punishment annexed, and that the threatening of sin with condign punishment should be universal; then it is necessary that it should be universally executed. A threatening of an omniscient and true being can be supposed to signify no more punishment than is

intended to be executed, and is not necessarily to be understood of any more. A threatening, if it signifies any thing, is a signification of some connection betwixt the crime and the punishment. But the threatening of an omniscient being, cannot be understood to signify any more connection with punishment than there is.

If it be needful that there should be a divine law, it is needful that this divine law should be maintained in the nature, life, authority and strength that is proper to it as a law. The nature, life, authority and strength of every law, consists in its sanction, by which the deed is connected with the compensation; and therefore depends on the strength and firmness of that connection. In proportion as that connection is weak, in such proportion does the law lose its strength, and fails of the proper nature and power of a law, and degenerates towards the nature of requests and expressions of will and desire to receive love and respect, without being enforced with authority.

Dispensing with the law by the lawgiver, so as not to fulfil it or execute it, in its nature does not differ from an abrogation of it, unless the law contains in itself such a clause, that it shall or may be dispensed with, and not fulfilled in certain cases, or when the lawgiver pleases.

But this would be a contradiction. For, if the law contained such a clause; then, not to fulfil it, would be according to the law, and a fulfilment of the law; and therefore there would be no dispensing with the law in it, because it is doing what the law itself directs to. The law may contain clauses of exception, wherein particular cases may be excepted from general rules; but it cannot make provision for a dispensation. And therefore, for the lawgiver to dispense with it, is indeed to abrogate it. Though it may not be an abrogating it wholly, yet it is in some measure changing it. To dispense with the law, in not fulfilling it on him that breaks it, is making the rule give place to the sinner. But certainly it is an indecent thing, that sin, which provokes the execution, should procure the abrogation of the law.

The necessity of fulfilling the law, in the sense that has been spoken of, appears from Matt. v. 18: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled." The words will allow of no other tolerable sense.

It is necessary that the law of God should be maintained and executed, and not dispensed with or abrogated for the sake of the sinner, for the following reasons:

1*st*. The nature and being of the law requires it. For, as has been already shown, by such dispensation it loses the life and authority of a law, as it respects the subject. But it does not only fail of being a law in this respect; it fails of being a rule to the Supreme Judge. The law is the great rule of righteousness and decorum, that the Supreme and Universal Rector has established and published, for the regulation of things in the commonwealth of the universality of intelligent beings and moral agents, in all that relates to them as concerned one with another; a rule, by which things are not only to be regulated between one subject and another, but between the king and subjects; that it may be a rule of judgment to the one, as well as a rule of duty to the other. It is but reasonable to suppose, that such a rule should be established and published for the benefit of all that belong to this universal commonwealth, to be a rule to direct both their actions towards each other, and their expectations from each other, that they may have a fixed and known rule by which they are to act and to be dealt with, to be both active and passive as members of this commonwealth. The subject is most nearly concerned, not only in the

measure of his own actions, but also in the consequences of them, or the method of his judge's determinations concerning him.

None that own the existence of a divine law, with threatenings annexed, can deny that there actually is such a rule as this, that relates both to the manner of the creature's acting, and also the judge's acting toward him as subject to that law. For none will deny that the precepts relate to the manner of the subject's acting, and that the threatenings relate to the manner of the judge's proceeding with the subject, in consequence of his obedience or disobedience.

It is needful that this great rule for managing affairs in this universal commonwealth, should be fixed and settled, and not be vague and uncertain. So far as it fails of this, it ceases to be of the nature of a rule. For it is essential to the nature of a rule, that it be something fixed. But if it be needful that it be something fixed, then it is needful that the author, and he by whom it subsists, should maintain and fulfil it, and not depart from it; because that is in a measure to disannul it. If he doth so, therein the rule becomes unfixed, and it so far ceases to be a rule to the judge.

2d. That the law should be made to give place to the sinner, is contrary to the direct design of the law. For the law was made that the subject should be regulated by it, and give place to it; and not to be regulated by the subject, and to give place to him, especially to a wicked, vile, rebellious subject.

The law is made that it might prevent sin, and cause it not to be; and not that sin should disannul the law and cause it not to be. Therefore it would be very indecent for the Supreme Rector to cause this great rule to give place to the rebellion of the sinner.

3d. It is in no wise fit that this great rule should be abrogated and give place to the opposition and violation of the rebellious subject, on account of the perfection of the law, and as it is an expression of the perfection of the lawgiver. The holiness and rectitude and goodness of this great rule, which the Supreme Lawgiver has established for the regulation of the commonwealth of moral agents, and its universal fitness and wisdom and absolute perfection, render a partial abrogation, for the sake of them that dislike it and will not submit to it, needless and unseemly. If the great rule should be set aside for the sake of the rebel, it would carry too much of the face of acknowledgment, in the lawgiver, of want of wisdom and foresight, or of some defect in point of holiness or righteousness in his law. He that breaks the law, finds fault with it, and casts that reflection on it, that it is not a good law; and if God should in part abrogate the law upon this, it would have too much the appearance of a conceding to the sinner's objection against it.

But God will magnify his law, and make it honorable, and will give no occasion for any such reflections upon it, nor leave the law under such a reflection.

If this great rule of righteousness be so excellent and good a law, it is not only unfit that it should give place to rebellion, as this would be a dishonor to the excellency of the law and lawgiver; but also a wrong to the public good, which the Supreme Rector of the world has the care and is the guardian of. If the rule be perfect, perfectly right and just and holy, and with infinite wisdom adapted to the good of the whole; then the public good requires that it be strongly established. The more firmly it is settled, and the more strongly it is guarded and defended the better, and the more is it for the public good; and every thing by which it is weakened, is a damage and loss to the commonwealth of beings.

But I have already shown how every departure from it weakens it, unfixes it, and causes it to fail of the nature of a settled rule, and, in some measure disannuls it.

4th. The sacredness of the authority and majesty of the Divine Lawgiver requires, that he should maintain and fulfil his law, when it is violated by a rebellious subject. I have before spoken of the greatness and majesty of his Being, how that is concerned in it. I now would consider the sacredness of his authority, as he stands related to his creatures as their Lawgiver. The majesty of a ruler consists very much in that which appears in him; that tends to strike the subject with reverence and awe, and dread of contempt of him or rebellion against him. And it is fit that this awe and dread should be in proportion to the greatness and dignity of the ruler, and the degree of authority with which he is vested. But this awe and dread is by an apprehension of the terribleness of the consequences of that contempt and rebellion, and the degree of the danger of those terrible consequences, or the degree of connection of that rebellion with those consequences: therefore, if it be meet that this awe or this apprehension should be in proportion to the greatness and dignity of the ruler, then it is fit that the consequences of contempt of the Supreme Ruler of the world should be infinitely terrible, and the danger that it brings of punishment, or connection that it has with it, be strong and certain, and consequently that the threatenings which enforce his laws should be sure and inviolable. It is fit the authority of a ruler should be sacred proportionably to the greatness of that authority, i. e., in proportion to the greatness of the ruler, and his worthiness of honor and obedience, and the height of his exaltation above us, and the absoluteness of his dominion over us, and the strength of his right to our submission and obedience. But the sacredness of the authority of a sovereign consists in the strength of the enforcement of it, and guard that is about it, i. e., in the consequences of the violation to him that is guilty, and the degree of danger of these consequences. For the authority of a ruler does not consist in the power or influence he has on another by attractives, but coercives. The fence that is about the authority of a prince, that guards it as sacred, is the connection there is between the violations of it, and the terrible consequences; or, in other words, in the strength or sureness of the threatening. Therefore, if this connection be partly broken, the fence is partly broken: in proportion as the threatenings are weak, the guard is weak. But certainly it is fit that the authority of the infinitely great and absolute Lord of heaven and earth should be infinitely sacred, and should be kept so with an infinitely strong guard, and a fence without any breach in it. And it is not becoming the sacredness of the majesty and authority of the great παντοκρατωρ, that that perfectly holy, just and infinitely wise and good law, which he has established as the great rule for the regulation of all things in the universal commonwealth of beings, should be set aside, to give place to the infinitely unreasonable and vile opposition that sinners make to it, and their horrid and daring rebellion against it.

5th. The truth of the lawgiver makes it necessary that the threatening of the law should be fulfilled in every punctilio. The threatening of the law is absolute: Thou shalt surely die. It is true, the obligation does not lay in the claim of the person threatened, as it is in promises: for it is not to be supposed, that the person threatened will claim the punishment threatened. And, indeed, if we look upon things strictly, those seem to reckon the wrong way, that suppose the necessity of the futurity of the execution to arise from an obligation on God in executing, properly consequent on his threatening. For the necessity

of the connection of the execution with the threatening, seems to arise directly the other way, viz., from the obligation that was on the omniscient God in threatening, consequent on the futurity of the execution. Though, strictly speaking, he is not obliged to execute because he has threatened, yet he was obliged not absolutely to threaten, if he at the same time knew that he should not and would not execute; because this would not have been consistent with his truth. So that, from the truth of God, there is an inviolable connection between absolute threatening and execution; not so properly from an obligation on God to conform the execution to the past absolute threatening, as from his obligation to conform his absolute threatening to the future execution This, God was absolutely obliged to do, as he would speak the truth. For if God absolutely threatened contrary to what he knew would come to pass, then he absolutely threatened contrary to what he knew to be truth. And how any can speak contrary to what they know to be the truth, in declaring, promising, or threatening, or any other way, consistently with perfect and inviolable truth, I cannot conceive. Threatenings are significations of something; and, if they are made consistent with truth, or are true significations of any thing, they are significations of truth, or significations of that which is true. If absolute threatenings are significations of any thing, they are significations of the futurity of the thing threatened. But if the futurity of the thing threatened is not true, then how can the threatenings be true significations? And if God, in them, speaks contrary to what he knows, and contrary to what he intends; how he can speak true, is to me inconceivable. It is with absolute threatenings, as it is with predictions. When God has foretold something that shall come to pass hereafter, which does not concern our interest, and so is of the nature neither of a promise nor threatening, there is a necessary connection betwixt the prediction and the fulfilment, but not by virtue of any claim we have to make; and so not properly by virtue of any obligation to fulfil, consequent on the prediction, but by virtue of an obligation on an omniscient Being in predicting, consequent on what he knew he would fulfil; an obligation to conform the prediction to the future event. It is as much against the veracity of God, absolutely to threaten what he knows he will not accomplish, as to predict what he knows he will not accomplish; for to do either, would be to declare, that that will be, which he at the same time does not intend shall be. Absolute threatenings are a sort of predictions. God in them foretells or declares what shall come to pass. They do not differ from mere predictions, in the nature of the declaration or foretelling, but partly in the thing declared or foretold, being an evil to come upon us; and a mere prediction being of a thing indifferent: and partly *in the end* of foretelling. In a threatening, the end of foretelling is to deter us from sinning; and the predictions of things indifferent are for some other end. Absolute threatenings are God's declarations of something future; and the truth of God does as much oblige him to keep the truth in declarations of what is future, as of what is past or present. For things past, present, and future, are all alike before God—all alike in his view. And when God declares to others what he sees himself, he is equally obliged to truth, whether the thing declared be past, present, or to come. And, indeed, there is no need of the distinction between present truth and future, in this case. For if any of God's absolute threatenings are not to be fulfilled, those threatenings are declarations or revelations contrary, not only to future truth, but such a threatening is a revelation of the futurition of a punishment. That futurition is now present with God, when he threatens;—present in his mind, his knowledge. And if he signifies that a thing is future, which he knows not to be future; then the sig-

nification he gives is contrary to present truth, even contrary to what God now knows is future.—Again, an absolute threatening is a signification of the present intention of him that threatens: and therefore, if he threatens what he does not intend to fulfil, then he signifies an intention to be, which is not; and so the threatening is contrary to present truth. God's absolute threatenings are a revelation to his subjects, of the appointed measures of their Judge's proceeding with respect to their breaches of his law; and if they do not reveal what is indeed the intended method of the Judge's proceeding, then it is not a true revelation.

There is a necessity of the fulfilment of God's absolute promises both ways: viz., both by an obligation on God to foretell or declare, or foredeclare, the future benefit, according to what he foresaw would be, and he intended should be; and also by an obligation on him to fulfil his promise consequent on his predicting, and by virtue of the claim of the person to whom the promise was made.

And there is also an obligation on God to fulfil his absolute threatenings consequent on his threatenings, *indirectly*, by virtue of many ill and undesirable consequences of the event's being, beside the certain dependence or certain expectations raised by God's threatenings, in the persons threatened, and others that are spectators; which consequences God may be obliged not to be a cause of. But threatenings do not properly bring an obligation on God, that is consequent on them as threatenings, as it is with promises.

As to those threatenings that are not positive or absolute, they are not necessarily followed with the punishment mentioned in them, because the possibility of escaping the punishment is either expressed or understood in the threatening. But the divine truth makes it necessary that there should be a certain connection between them, that as much punishment be inflicted as is signified by them. If certain suffering be not signified by them, then there is no necessary connection between them and certain suffering. If it be only signified in them, that there is great danger of the suffering, according to God's ordinary method of dealing with men, and that, therefore, they, as they would act rationally, have great reason to fear it, seeing that God does not see cause to reveal what he will do to them: if this be all that is really contained and understood in the threatening, then this is all that the threatening is connected with. Or, if the proper meaning of the threatening be, that such suffering shall come, unless they repent, and this be all that can be fairly understood, then the truth of God makes no more necessary. But God's truth makes a necessary connection between every threatening and every promise, and all that is properly signified in that threatening or promise.

§ 2. The satisfaction of Christ by his death is certainly a very rational thing. If any person that was greatly obliged to me, that was dependent on me, and that I loved, should exceedingly abuse me, and should go on in an obstinate course of it from one year to another, notwithstanding all I could say to him, and all new obligations continually repeated; though at length he should leave it off, I should not forgive him, unless upon gospel considerations. But if any person that was a much dearer friend to me, and one that had always been true to me, and constant to the utmost, and that was a very near relation of him that offended me, should intercede for him, and, out of the entire love he had to him, should put himself to very hard labors and difficulties, and undergo great pains and miseries to procure him forgiveness; and the person that had offended should, with a changed mind, fly to this mediator, and should seek favor in his name, with a sense in his own mind how much his

mediator had done and suffered for him; I should be satisfied, and feel myself inclined, without any difficulty, to receive him into my entire friendship again; but not without the last mentioned condition, that he should be sensible how much his mediator had done and suffered. For if he was ignorant of it, or thought he had done only some small matter, I should not be easy nor satisfied So a sense of Christ's sufficiency seems necessary in faith.

§ 3. The apostle, when he would express his willingness to be made a sacrifice for his brethren the Jews, says, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren," Rom ix. 3. See, concerning Moses, Exodus xxxii. 32, 2 Sam. xviii. 33: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee." This text expresses substitution, Matt. xx. 28, "To give his life a ransom for many." Concerning this text, and the force of the proposition *αντι*, see *Moncrief's review and examination of the principles of Campbell*, p. 113, 114.

The laying of hands on the head of the sacrifice, was a token of putting the guilt of sin upon a person; agreeably to the customary signification of the imputation of guilt among the Hebrews. Thus the phrase, *his blood shall be upon their own head or on our heads*, &c., was a phrase for the imputation of the guilt of blood. So Joshua ii. 19, 1 Kings ii. 32, 33: "And the Lord shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed forever, but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the Lord." Verse 37, "For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die; thy blood shall be upon thine own head." Verse 44, "The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father; therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head."

Abigail, when mediating between David and Nabal, when the former was provoked to wrath against the latter, and had determined to destroy him, 1 Sam xxv. 24, "fell at David's feet and said, Upon me let this iniquity be, and let thy handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thy audience, and hear the voice of thy handmaid." And in verse 28, she calls Nabal's iniquity her iniquity. By this it appears, that a mediator's putting himself in the stead of the offender, so that the offended party should impute the offence to him, and look on the mediator as having taken it upon him, looking on him as the debtor for what satisfaction should be required and expected, was in those days no strange notion, or considered as a thing in itself absurd and inconsistent with men's natural notion of things.

Heb. xii. 24, 25, 26, "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth; much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only," &c

He that speaketh, whom the apostle warns us not to refuse, who spake once on earth, and whose voice shook the earth, and who now speaketh from heaven, and his voice shakes not only the earth but heaven, is he that is spoken of verse 24 *Jesus the mediator, &c., whose blood speaketh.* The word *χρηματιζω* signifies

to *speak divine oracles*, and in Scripture is applied to God alone When it is said he spake on earth, respect is had to God's giving the law at Mount Sinai, when his voice shook the earth. It is plain it was not the voice of Moses, or any created angel that is intended, by the whole history of the affair in Exodus. The people made great preparation to meet with God: God descended on the Mount: he was there in the midst of angels, Psalm lxviii. 17. "From his right hand went the fiery law," Deut. xxxiii. 2. And in giving the law he says, "I am the Lord thy God," &c. He that in the book of Haggai ii. 6, 7, which the apostle refers to, says, "Yet once more I shake the heaven and the earth," is God. *See Owen in loc. p.* 273, 274, 278.

Christ is often represented as bearing our sins for us: Isaiah liii. 4, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Verse 11, "For he shall bear their iniquities." Verse 12, "He bare the sin of many." And with an evident reference to this last place, the apostle says, Heb. ix. 28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and to them that look for him, he shall appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." And with a plain reference to verses, 4, 5, of this 53d chapter of Isaiah, the apostle Peter says, 1 Pet. ii. 24, "Who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

The word translated here in Isaiah liii. 4, and 12, is נשׂא; the same word, and the same phrase, of bearing sin and bearing iniquity, is often used concerning things which are the types of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice, viz., the Levitical priests and sacrifices. It was no uncommon phrase, but usual, and well understood among the Jews; and we find it very often used in other cases, and applied to others besides either Christ or the types of him. And when it is so, it is plain that the general meaning of the phrase is lying under the guilt of sin, having it imputed and charged upon the person, as obnoxious to the punishment of it, or obliged to answer and make satisfaction for it; or liable to the calamities and miseries to which it exposes. In such a manner it seems always to be used, unless in some few places it signifies to take away sin by forgiveness. See *Dr. Owen* on Heb. ix. 28. and *Pool's Synopsis* on Isaiah liii. And concerning their laying their hands on the head of the sacrifice, see also *Pool's Synopsis* on Levit. i. 4.

That God, in the instituted ceremonies concerning the scape goat, and the other goat that was sacrificed for a sin-offering, intended that there should be a representation of laying the guilt of sin on those goats; see *Pool's Synopsis* on Levit. xvi. 21, 22, 28. It was an evidence that the two goats were to appear as if they were made sinful with the sins of the people, or unclean with their uncleanness, or guilty with their guilt, that he that brought the one, and he that let go the other, were both unclean, and were therefore to wash themselves with water, &c., Levit. xvi. 26, 28.

The translation of guilt or obligation to punishment was not a thing alien from men's conceptions and notions of old in Scripture times; neither the times of the Old Testament nor New; as appears by what the woman of Tekoa says, 2 Sam. xiv. 9: "My Lord, O king, the iniquity be on me and on my father's house, and the king and his throne be guiltless." And by what the Jews said, when Pilate said of Christ, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see ye to it," Matt. xxvii. 24, 25, "His blood be on us and on our children." And the words of Rebekah, when Jacob objected against doing as she proposed, that he should bring a curse on himself and not a blessing: Gen. xxvii. 13, "On me be thy curse, my son, only obey my voice."

1 Cor. xv. 17, "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins," plainly shows how necessary it was that there should be

something more than reformation, which was plainly in fact wrought, in order to their being delivered from their sins; even that atonement, the sufficiency of which God attested by raising our Great Surety from the grave."—*Doddridge in loc.*

Defin. 1. *By merit*, in this discourse, I mean any thing whatsoever in any person or being, or about him or belonging to him, which appearing in the view of another is a recommendation of him to that other's regard, esteem or affection. I do not at present take into consideration, whether that which thus recommends be real merit, or something that truly, according to the nature of things, is worthy to induce esteem, &c.; but only what actually recommends and appears worthy in the eye of him to whom it recommends the other; which is the case of every thing that is actually the ground of respect or affection in one towards another, whether the ground be real worth, or only agreement in temper, benefits received, near relation, long acquaintance, &c. &c. Whatever it be that is by the respecting person viewed in the person respected, that actually has influence, and is effectual to recommend to respect, is merit or worthiness of respect or fitness for it in his eyes.

Defin. 2. By *patron*, I mean a person of superior dignity or merit, that stands for and espouses the interest of another, interposes between him and a third person or party, in that capacity to maintain, secure, or promote the interest of that other, by his influence with the third person, improving his merit with him, or interest in his esteem and regard for that end. And by *client*, I mean that other person whose interest the patron thus espouses, and in this manner endeavors to maintain and promote.

Having explained how I use these terms, I would now observe the following things.

1. It is not unreasonable or against nature, or without foundation in the reason and nature of things, that respect should be shown to one on account of his relation to or union and connection with another: or, which is the same thing, that a person should be thought the proper object of respect or regard, viewed in that relation or connection, which he is not the proper object of, viewed as by himself singly and separately: or, which is still the same thing, that a person should be thought worthy of respect, or meriting respect on the account of the merit of the other person whom he stands related to, which he would not merit viewed by himself, taking the word here as it has been explained.

2 Whenever one is thus viewed, as having a merit of respect on the account of the merit of another that he stands related to, who has not that merit considered by himself, the merit of the person he is related to is imputed to him; and these persons so far are substituted the one in the place of the other. This is plain: for the person now accepted as having merit of respect, has not that merit in himself considered alone, but only as related to another that has merit in himself, and so is respected for the sake of the merit of that other; which is the very same thing as, in our view or consideration, transferring that merit from that other person to him, and viewing it in him as his merit, or merit that he is interested in, merit whose recommending influence becomes his in some degree; so that in all such cases there is an imputation and substitution in some degree. The merit of the one becomes the merit of the other in some degree; or, in other words, the recommending property, virtue and influence of the one, becomes the recommending influence of the other, or influence that prevails to recommend the other; which is the same thing. Thus it is, when any one respects a near relation, or a child, or the spouse of a friend that is very dear and

greatly esteemed for such a friend's sake, or shows the relative or friend greater regard, seeks his welfare more, and shows him more kindness than he would do if he were viewed out of such a relation or connection, and entirely by himself.

Thus it is reasonable and natural, that one should be respected for the merit of another, and so his merit be in some degree imputed to another, and one person be substituted for another, according to the natural sense of all mankind.

3. As it is the relation of one to another, or his union with him, that is the ground of the respect that is shown towards him for the other's sake, and so the ground of substitution of the other in his stead, and of the imputation of the other's merit in some degree, as has been observed; so it is manifest, that the greater or nearer that relation is, and the stricter the union, so much the more does it prevail for the acceptance of the person, or the object of respect, for the sake of him to whom he is united; or, in other words, the union, by how much greater and closer it is, by so much more is it a ground of his being accepted, as if he were one with the other, or of the other's being substituted for him, and his merit's being imputed in a greater degree, and more, as if he were the same.

4. If there be any such thing as a union of a person to another, as, for instance; a patron to a client, in such a certain degree, or in such a manner as, that on the account of the degree and manner, it shall be peculiarly fit to look upon them as completely one and the same, as to all that concerns the interest of the client, with relation to the regard of the friend of the patron; then especially may the patron be taken by his friend as the substitute of the client, and his merit be imputed to him.

If it be inquired, what degree or manner of union may be looked upon thus complete;—I answer, When the patron's heart is so united to the client, that when the client is to be destroyed, he, from love, is willing to take his destruction on himself, or what is equivalent thereto, so that the client may escape; then he may be properly accepted as perfectly one with regard to the interest of the client; for this reason, that his love to the client is such as thoroughly puts him into the place of the client in all that concerns his interest, even so as to absorb or swallow up his whole interest; because his love actually puts him in the room of the beloved, in that suffering or calamity which, being his total destruction, does swallow up and consume all his interest, without leaving the least part of it. Therefore, love that will take that destruction, evidently takes in his whole interest. It appears to be an equal balance for it. His love puts him thoroughly in his client's stead If his love were such as made him willing to put himself in the other's stead, in many cases where his interest was concerned, but yet not in a case where all is concerned, the union is not complete; he is partially, and not thoroughly, united. But when the love of the patron is such as to go through with the matter, and makes him willing to put himself in the other's stead, even in the case of the last extremity, and where the beloved is to be utterly and perfectly destroyed; then he is, as to his love, sufficiently united, so as to be accepted as completely one by his friend, in all that concerns the client's welfare.

5. If a friend that is very dear to any person, and of great merit in the eyes of any person, not only stands in a strict union with another, but also does particularly express a great desire of that other's welfare, and appears much to seek it; it is agreeable to nature, that the welfare of the person united to him should be regarded for his sake, and on his account, as if it were his own welfare

For, by means of this desire of the other's welfare, his welfare becomes his own. For that good which any one desires, sets his heart upon, and seeks, thereby becomes his own good: it becomes a good that is grateful to him, or which tends to gratify and delight him: for it is grateful to all to have their desires gratified.

In such a case, the dear and worthy person makes the other's interest his own by his explicit choice; by his own act he places his interest in the interest of the other, and so substitutes himself in the other's stead, as to the affair of interest or welfare.

And the greater that desire appears, the more earnestly he seeks the other's welfare, and the greater things he does to obtain it: so much the more does his interest become his own, and so much the more does he substitute himself in the room of the other.

6. Especially is the client's welfare properly and naturally regarded, for the sake of the patron that is very dear and worthy in the eyes of any person, when the way in which the patron expresses his desire of the client's welfare, that he is closely united to, and in which he seeks it, is by suffering and being at expense of his own personal and private welfare in any degree, for the welfare of the client. Expending one's good or interest for another, is properly transferring the interest in the good expended, into the good sought: the expended good, which is the means, is properly set aside and removed, in the regard of him that is at the expense, and whose regard is placed on that good which is the end. The good of the price is parted with, for the good of the thing purchased; and therefore, here is a proper substitution of one in the place of the other.

In such a case, therefore, in a more special manner, will it be proper and natural for one in whose eyes the patron is very worthy, and to whom he is very dear, to have regard to the welfare of the client for the patron's sake, or for the sake of the patron's merit: as, suppose the client of the excellent and dear patron be a child or spouse in captivity, and the patron lays out himself exceedingly for the client's redemption, and goes through many and very great hardships, and is at vast expense for the obtaining of it.

7. If the patron who seeks the welfare of the client, in his seeking of it, does particularly and directly apply himself to the person who has so high an esteem and affection for him, expressing his desires of the client's welfare in request to him, and the endeavors that are used with him, and what is expended for the client's welfare be given to him, expended for him, for his sake, promoting his ends, or for something that his friend regards as his own interest; then especially is it natural that the person, of whom his client's welfare is sought, should be ready to grant it for his sake.

8. It is still more highly proper and natural to regard the client's welfare on account of the patron's merit, or to reckon the merit of the patron to his client's account; if the merit of the patron consists, or especially appears in what he does for his client's welfare; or if the virtues and worthy qualities have their chief exercise, and do chiefly exhibit their amiableness in those excellent and amiable acts which he performs in seeking the good of the client, in the deeds he performs on the account of the interest of the client, and in his applying to his friend for it; in the acts he performs as an intercessor with his friend for it, and the service he does him on this account. In this case, it is peculiarly natural to accept the client, on the account of the merit of the patron; for the merit is on his account, and has its existence for the sake of the client.

9 More especially is it natural, when his merit, above all, consists and appears in the very expense the patron is at of his own welfare, for the welfare

of the client or in the act of expending or exchanging the one for the other. For, as was observed before, such expense is properly regarded as a price of the client's welfare; but when such merit is added to the price, this merit becomes the worth, value or preciousness of the price; preciousness of another kind, besides merely the value of the natural good parted with. It adds a moral good to the price, equal to the natural good expended; so that the worthiness of the patron, and the value expended are offered both together in one, as the price of the welfare of the client.

10. The thus accepting the patron's merit, as being placed to the account of the client, will be more natural still, if the patron puts himself in the place of that client, undertaking to appear for him, to represent him, and act in his stead by an exceeding great change in his circumstances, clothes himself with the form of his client, goes where he is, takes his place in the universe, puts himself into his circumstances, and is in all things made like unto him, wherein this may be consistent with maintaining his merit inviolable. If the client be unworthy, and an offender, and has deserved ill of the person whose favor he needs, then abating and dismissing resentment, or lessening or withholding the evil deserved, for the sake of the merit of the patron, is equivalent to a positive favor for his sake, in case of no offence and demerit of punishment.

11. If the person that needs favor be an offender and unworthy, then, in order to a proper influence and effect of the union and merit of a patron, to induce his friend to receive him into favor on his account, the union of the patron with his client, and his undertaking and appearing as his patron to seek favor for him should be in such a manner, and attended with such circumstances, as not to diminish his merit, i. e., so as that his union with, and intercession for the client, shall not in the least infringe on these two things, viz., the patron's own union with his friend, whose favor he seeks for the client, and his merit strictly so called, i. e., his own virtue. For if his own worthiness be diminished, by his union with one that is unworthy, then his influence to recommend the client one way, is destroyed one way, at the same time that it is established another. For that recommending influence consists in these two things, viz., his merit, and his union with the client. Therefore, if one of these is diminished or destroyed, as the other is advanced and established; nothing is done on the whole toward recommending the client. Therefore, in order that, on the whole, the client be effectually recommended, it is necessary that the patron's union to an offending unworthy client should be attended with such circumstances, that it shall not be at all inconsistent with these two things, his regard to his friend, and his regard to virtue or holiness: for in these two things consists his merit in the eyes of his friend; and therefore it is necessary, that his appearing united to his unworthy and offending client should be with such circumstances as most plainly to demonstrate, that he perfectly disapproves of his offence and unworthiness, and to show a perfect regard to virtue, and to the honor and dignity of his offended, injured friend. There is no way that this can be so thoroughly and fully done, as by undertaking himself to pay the debt to the honor and rights of his injured friend, and to honor the rule of virtue and righteousness the client has violated, by putting himself in the stead of the offender, into subjection to the injured rights and violated authority of his offended friend, and under the violated law and rule of righteousness belonging to one in the client's state; and so, for the sake of the honor of his friend's authority, and the honor of the rule of righteousness, suffering the whole penalty due to the offender, and which would have been requisite to be suffered by him, for the maintaining the honor and dignity of those things; and himself, by such great

condescension, and under such self-denial, honoring those rights and rules by his obedience and perfect conformity to them; hereby giving the most evident testimony to all beholders, that although he loves his client and seeks his welfare, yet he had rather be humbled so low, deny himself so greatly, and suffer so much, than that his welfare should be in the least diminished, his authority weakened, and his honor and his dignity degraded.

12. If the patron be, in the eyes of him whose favor is sought, of very great dignity, it is agreeable to reason and nature that this should have influence to procure greater favor to the client than if he were of less dignity. And when it is inquired, whether there be a sufficiency in the patron and his relation to his client, to answer to such a degree of favor as is proposed to be obtained for him; the dignity of the patron is one thing that is to be estimated and put into the scales, with the degree of favor sought, in order to know whether it be sufficient to countervail it. By dignity, I here intend, not only the degree of virtue and relation to his friend, of whom he seeks favor, but the greatness of the person of the patron.

If, in adjusting this matter, the dignity that is viewed in the patron and his friend's regard to him, be so great, that, considered with the degree of the patron's union with his client, there is a sufficiency to countervail all the favor that the client needs, or the utmost that he is capable of receiving, then there is a perfect sufficiency in the patron for the client, or a sufficiency completely to answer and support the whole interest of the client; or a sufficiency in his friend's regard to the patron, wholly to receive, take in, and comprehend the client, with regard to his whole interest, or all that pertains to his welfare; or, which is the same thing, a sufficiency fully to answer for him as his representative and substitute, in all that pertains to his welfare.

13. If the patron and client are equals as to greatness of being or degree of existence, and the degree of the patron's union with his client should be such (and that were possible) that he regarded the interest of the client equally with his own personal interest; then it would be natural for the patron's friend to regard the client's welfare for the sake of the patron, as much as he regards the patron's own personal welfare: because, when the case is so, the patron is as strictly united to the client as he is to himself, and his client's welfare becomes perfectly, and to all intents and purposes, his own interest, as much as his personal welfare; and therefore, as the love of his friend to him disposes him to regard whatever is his interest, to such a degree as it is his interest; so it must dispose him to regard the client's welfare in an equal degree with his own personal interest; because, by the supposition, it is his interest in an equal degree But this must be here provided or supposed, viz., not only that so strict a union of the patron and client be possible, but also that it be proper, or that there be no impropriety or unfitness in it: because, if it be unfit, then the patron's being so strictly united to him, diminishes his merit; because merit, at least in part, consists in a regard to what is proper and fit; and if the degree of union be unfit, it diminishes the influence of that union to recommend the client one way, as much as it increases it another.

14. If the patron and the client are not equals, but the patron be greater and vastly superior as to rank and degree of existence, it gives greater weight to his union, as to its influence with the friend of his patron, to recommend the client; so that a less degree of union of the patron with the client may be equivalent to a greater union, in case of equality. Therefore, in this case, though the union be not so great as that his regard to the client's interest should be equal with his own personal interest, but may be much less, yet his

regard to it may be such, that its recommending influence may be equivalent to that which is fully equal in the case of equality of persons; and therefore may be sufficient to answer the same purposes towards the client, and consequently to be perfectly sufficient for the client, with regard to the client's whole interest.

15. From these things, we may gather this as a rule whereby to judge whether there be a sufficiency in the patron's union with his client, to answer for the whole interest of the client with the patron's friend, with respect to the degree of union of the patron, and the degree of greatness, where there is no defect of merit in other respects, viz., that the patron's union with the client shall be such, that considering jointly both the degree of greatness, and degree of union, the patron's union with his client shall be as considerable and weighty, and have as much recommending influence, as if, in case of equality of the patron with his client, the union between them was so great, that the patron's regard to the welfare of the client were equal to his own.

16. Then the union of the patron has its measure and proportion according to the rule now mentioned, and so is sufficient to answer his whole interest; when the degree of his regard to his client's interest stands in the same proportion to his regard to his own personal interest, as the degree of the capacity of the client stands in to the degree of his own capacity; for the degrees of capacity are as the greatness or the degrees of existence of the person.

17. When the patron's regard to his client is thus proportioned, that is, when he regards the client's interest as his own, according to the client's capacity, then such a union may most fitly and aptly be represented, by the client's being taken by the patron to be as a part or member of himself, as though he were a member of his body. For men love each part of themselves as themselves, but yet not each part equally with themselves; but each part as themselves, according to the measure of the capacity of the part. A man loves his little finger as himself, but not equally with the head; but yet with the same love he bears to himself, according to the place, measure and capacity of the little finger.

18. The most proper and plain trial and demonstration of this sufficiency of union of the patron with the client, consisting in such a proportion of regard to his welfare as has been mentioned, is the patron's being willing to bear sufferings for the client, or in his stead, that are equivalent to sufferings which properly belong to the latter; which equivalence of suffering must be determined by a joint estimation of these two things, viz., the degree of suffering, and the greatness of the sufferer When the effect of the patron's love to the client is a suffering for the client that is equal in value or weight to the client's suffering, considering the difference of the degree of persons; it shows, that the love to the client, which is the cause of this suffering, is also equal or equivalent to his love for himself, according to the different degree of the persons.

The most proper and clear trial of the measure of love or regard to the interest of another, is the measure of suffering, or expense of personal interest, for the interest of the beloved. So much as the lover regards the welfare of the beloved, so much in value or weight of his own welfare, will he be willing to part with for it. If the value of the welfare obtained, be, in the regard of the sufferer, fully equal to the value of the welfare parted with, then, there being an equal balance, no preponderation of self-love will hinder parting with one for the other. The love therefore is sufficient and equal to self-love, allowing only for the difference of capacity or greatness of the persons; as the sufferings are equal, allowing for the same difference of the degree of persons.

19. There can be but one thing more requisite, according to the nature of things, in order to its being to all intents and purposes proper and suitable that the patron should be accepted as one with the client, in what pertains to the client's interest, and his merits being imputed to the client, and his having favor on the account of it; which is this, that seeing the client is an intelligent being, capable of act and choice, he should therefore actively and cordially concur in the affair; that the union between the patron and him should be mutual; that as the patron's heart is united to the client, so the client's heart should be united to the patron; that as there is that disposition and those acts appearing in the patron that are proper to the character and relation of a patron in undertaking for the client to appear for him before his friend, as his representative, guardian, deliverer and Saviour, and condescending to him to do and suffer all for him needful for his help and advancement; so there must also appear in the client those dispositions and acts that are proper to the character and relation of a client, cleaving to him, committing his cause to him, and trusting in him, in an entire approbation of the patron's friendship, kind undertaking and patronage; and not only an approbation of the patron's union to him, by which he avails for his being looked upon as one with him, but also of the patron's union to his friend, whose favor he seeks, which union with his friend avails to the acceptance of the patron; and also an entire approbation of the benefits which the patron seeks of his friend for the client; or, in one word, a cordial and entire faith of the client in his patron. When there is thus a mutual union between the patron and client, and a union throughout between them both, and the friend whose favor is sought, together with those things before mentioned, there is every thing requisite in order to the fitness of the acceptance of the client on the account of the patron, and his receiving such favor from the patron's friend, as is requisite to all that pertains to the client's welfare; so that such acceptance and such favor shall be in all respects proper, according to the nature of things, and common sense of intelligent beings, and of no evil or improper consequence.

§ 4. "Besides the dignity of Christ's sufferings directly arising from the dignity of his person, there is another consideration, by which the value of our Saviour's sufferings ought to be estimated. As an indignity is always rated by the presumption, and as the presumption bears an exact proportion to the meanness of the person insulting, and to the greatness of the party insulted; so, in like manner, all acts of condescension are estimated by the humility, and that again by the dignity of the condescending person, and by the lowness and demerit of the party condescended to." *Deism Revealed*, edit. 2. vol. I. p. 252, 253.

§ 5. "It were (as an excellent writer has expressed it) manifestly more honorable and worthy of God, not to have exacted any recompense at all, than to have accepted, in the name of a sacrifice, such as were unproportionable, and beneath the value of what was to be remitted and conferred. What had been lower, must have been infinitely lower. Let any thing be supposed less than God, and it falls immensely short of him. Such is the distance between created being and uncreated, that the former is as nothing to the latter. And therefore, bring the honor and majesty of the Deity to any thing less than an equal value, and you bring it to nothing. And this had been quite to lose the design of insisting upon a recompense: it had been to make the majesty of heaven cheap, and depreciate the dignity of the divine government, instead of rendering it august and great." *Rawlin on Justification*, p. 104, 105.

§ 6. It is said that God is not obliged to fulfil his threatenings of punish-

ment of sin —Not to dispute about the import of the word *obliged*, let it be considered, whether it is not fit that God should fulfil his threatenings. If any answer, no; then I would inquire further whether the fitness of things does not require that God should pay some regard to his threatenings that belong to his law as its sanction; whether the law with its sanctions be not published or exhibited, that his subjects may view it as a rule of proceeding between the lawgiver and his subjects; and whether it can have the influence intended, or indeed any significancy, if it be not understood as such in some measure. Therefore, if it be not fit that God should act impertinently and insignificantly, it surely is fit that some regard should be paid to the law, not only in the actions of the subject, but also in the proceedings of the Judge. And if it be fit that some regard should be paid to it, how great a regard? If the rule may be set aside and departed from in one instance, why not in two? And why not in four? Where are the limits? The threatenings are no farther sanctions, than they are supposed to be declarations of truth. Therefore is it not fit that the threatenings of the law should be neglected. Truth is a thing which should always attend them in an inviolable manner. If God has reserved to himself the liberty of departing from the rule at his pleasure, without any signification beforehand, or any reason given to determine what his pleasure will be; then, how can the subject know but that he will always depart from it?

§ 7. *Texts taken from Rawlin on Justification, which show that the holiness and justice of God insists on sin's being punished.* Levit. x. 3, "Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Psal. xi. 6, 7, "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright." Exodus xxxiv. 7, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Job xxxiv. 10, 11, "Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding. Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways." Job x. 14, "If I sin, then thou makest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity." Chap. vii. 20, "I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?" Joshua xxiv. 19, "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins."

§ 8. It was needful that he that was a Mediator between two parties, that are distant and alienated one from the other, to be the middle person to unite them together, should himself be united to both. Otherwise he could not, by coming between them, be a bond of union between them. And if he be a Mediator between God and guilty men, it was necessary that he should unite himself to them, or assume them as it were to himself. But if he unites himself to guilty creatures, he of necessity brings their guilt on himself. If he unites himself to them that are in debt, he brings their debt on himself. He cannot properly unite himself to a rebel against God, and one that is obnoxious to God's wrath, and is condemned to condign punishment, to be a Mediator to bring God to be at peace with him, without voluntarily taking his sufferings on himself; because, otherwise, his undertaking for such a one, and uniting

himself to such a one, will appear like countenancing his offence and rebellion. But if at the same time that he unites himself to him, he takes it upon himself to bear his penalty, it quite takes off all such appearance. He shows that though he loves the rebel that has affronted the Divine Majesty, yet he at the same time has the greatest possible abhorrence of the injury to God's majesty, and dishonor to his name, in that he regards the honor of God's majesty so much as to be willing to endure so extreme sufferings, that the divine glory and majesty may not be injured, but fully maintained.

§ 9. Christ suffered the wrath of God for men's sins in such a way as he was capable of, being an infinitely holy person, who knew that God was not angry with him personally, knew that God did not hate him, but infinitely loved him. The wicked in hell will suffer the wrath of God, as they will have the sense and knowledge, and sight of God's infinite displeasure towards them and hatred of them. But this was impossible in Jesus Christ. Christ therefore could bear the wrath of God in no other but these two ways.

I. In having a great and clear sight of the infinite wrath of God against the sins of men, and the punishment they had deserved. This it was most fit that he should have, at the time when he was suffering in their stead, and paying their ransom to deliver them from that wrath and punishment. That he might know what he did, that he might act with full understanding at the time when he made expiation and paid ransom for sinners to redeem them from hell, *first*, It was requisite that at that time he should have a clear sight of two things, viz., of the dreadful evil and odiousness of that sin that he suffered for, that he might know how much it deserved the punishment; that it might be real and actual grace in him, that he undertook and suffered such things for those that were so unworthy and so hateful; which it could not be if he did not know how unworthy they were. *Secondly*, It was requisite he should have a clear sight of the dreadfulness of the punishment that he suffered to deliver them from, otherwise he would not know how great a benefit he vouchsafed them in redeeming them from this punishment; and so it could not be actual grace in him to bestow so great a benefit upon them; as, in the time that he bestowed, he would not have known how much he bestowed; he would have acted blindfold in giving so much. Therefore Christ, doubtless, actually had a clear view of both those things in the time of his last suffering: every thing in the circumstances of his last suffering concurred to give him a great and full sight of the former, viz., the evil and hateful nature of the sin of man. For its odious and malignant nature never appeared so much in its own proper colors, as it did in that act of murdering the Son of God, and in exercising such contempt and cruelty towards him. Likewise every thing in the circumstances of his last sufferings tended to give him a striking view of the dreadful punishment of sin. The sight of the evil of sin tended to this, and so did the enduring of temporal death, that is a great image of eternal death, especially under such circumstances, with such extreme pain, God's hiding his face, his dying a death that by God's appointment was an accursed death, having a sight of the malice and triumph of devils, and being forsaken of his friends, &c. As God ordered external circumstances to help forward this purpose; so, there is all reason to think, that his own influences on Christ's mind were agreeable hereto, his Spirit acting with his providence to give him a full view of these things. Now, the clear view of each of these must of necessity be inexpressibly terrible to the man Christ Jesus. His having so clear an actual view of sin and its hatefulness, was an idea infinitely disagreeable to the holy nature of Christ; and, therefore, unless balanced with an equal sight of good that comes

by this evil, must have been an immensely disagreeable sensation in Christ's soul, or, which is the same thing, immense suffering. But that equally clear idea of good, to counterbalance the evil of sin, was not given at that time; because God forsook Christ, and hid himself from him, and withheld comfortable influences, or the clear ideas of pleasant objects. Thus Christ bare our sins; God laid on him the iniquities of us all, and he bare the burden of them; and so his bearing the burden of our sins may be considered as something diverse from his suffering God's wrath. For his suffering wrath consisted more in the sense he had of the other thing, viz., the dreadfulness of the punishment of sin, or the dreadfulness of God's wrath inflicted for it. Thus Christ was tormented not only in the fire of God's wrath, but in the fire of our sins; and our sins were his tormentors; the evil and malignant nature of sin was what Christ endured immediately, as well as more remotely, in bearing the consequences of it.

Thus Christ suffered that which the damned in hell do not suffer. For they do not see the hateful nature of sin. They have no idea of sin in itself, that is infinitely disagreeable to their nature, as the idea of sin was to Christ's holy nature; though conscience in them be awakened to behold the dreadful guilt and desert of sin. And as the clear view of sin in its hatefulness necessarily brought great suffering on the holy soul of Christ, so also did the view of its punishment. For both the evil of sin and the evil of punishment are infinite evils, and both infinitely disagreeable to Christ's nature: the former to his holy nature, or his nature as God; the latter to his human nature, or to his nature as man. Such is human nature, that a great, and clear, and full idea of suffering, without some other pleasant and sweet idea fully to balance it, brings suffering, as appears from the nature of all spiritual ideas. They are repetitions (in a degree at least) of the things themselves of which they are ideas. Therefore, if Christ had had a perfectly clear and full idea of what the damned suffer in hell, the suffering he would have had in the mere presence of that idea, would have been perfectly equal to the thing itself, if there had been no idea in Christ in any degree to balance it; such as some knowledge of the love of God, of a future reward, future salvation of his elect, &c. But pleasant ideas in this clearness being in a great measure withholden by reason of God's hiding his face; hence the awful ideas of eternal death which his elect people deserved, and of the dismal wrath of God, of consequence filled the soul of Christ with an inexpressible gloom.

Though Christ knew the love of God to him, and knew he should be successful in his sufferings; yet when God forsook him, those dismal views, those gloomy ideas so fixed and swallowed up his mind, that though he had the habitual knowledge of those other objects, yet he could not attend to them; he could have comparatively but little comfort and support from them; for they could afford support no farther than they were attended to, or were in actual view.

Christ's great love and pity to the elect (that his offering up himself on the cross was the greatest act and fruit of, and consequently which he was then in the highest exercise of) was one source of his suffering. A strong exercise of love excites a lively idea of the object beloved. And a strong exercise of pity excites a lively idea of the misery under which he pities them. Christ's love then brought his elect infinitely near to him in that great act and suffering wherein he especially stood for them, and was substituted in their stead: and his love and pity fixed the idea of them in his mind, as if he had really been they; and fixed their calamity in his mind, as though it really was his. A very strong and lively love and pity towards the miserable, tends to make their

case ours; as in other respects, so in this in particular, as it doth in our idea place us in their stead, under their misery, with a most lively, feeling sense of that misery, as it were feeling it for them, actually suffering it in their stead by strong sympathy.

Coroll. 1. Hence we may see how the same thing, the same ideas that distressed the soul of Christ and brought on his amazing sufferings, engaged him to go through them. It was ordered that the bitterness of the cup, though exceedingly dreadful, was of that nature, or consisted in that, that the tasting of that bitterness was the thing that engaged him to go on to drink up the cup; and that as the bitterness of it arose from each of the forementioned things. (1.) As it arose from the clear idea he had then given him of the infinitely hateful and dreadful nature of sin. The more lively this idea was, the more dreadful was it to the soul of Christ; and yet, the more lively his idea of the hatefulness and dreadfulness of sin was, which consists in disobedience to God, the more did it engage him not to disobey, himself, that great command he had received of his Father, viz., That he should drink this cup, and go through those sufferings.

The more he had a sense how dreadful it is to contemn the authority of God, and to dishonor his holy name; the more would he be engaged to remove and abolish this dishonor, and to honor the authority of God himself. The more he had a sense of what an odious and dreadful thing sin was, the more would his heart be engaged to do and suffer what was necessary to take away this dreadful and odious thing, from those his heart was united to in love, viz., those that the Father had given him. (2.) It was the lively exercise of love and pity to those that the Father had given him, that was one thing that occasioned so lively a view of the punishment they had exposed themselves to, whereby his soul was filled with a dismal sense, and so he suffered. But this lively love and pity at the same time engaged him to suffer for them, to deliver them from their deserved punishment that he had an idea of. And as pity towards his elect excited a lively idea of their misery; so, on the other hand, the increase of his idea of their misery excited strong exercises of pity, and this pity engaged him still to to endure those sufferings in their stead.

Coroll. 2. From what has been said, we may learn how Christ was sanctified in his last sufferings. The suffering of his soul in great part consisted in the great and dreadful sense and idea that he then had given him of the dreadful, horrid odiousness of sin; which was done by the Spirit of God. But this could not be without a proportionable increase of his aversion to, and hatred of, sin; and consequently of his inclination to the contrary, which is the same thing as an increase of the holiness of his nature. Beside the immediate sight he had given him of the odious nature of sin, he had that strong sense, and that great experience of the bitter fruit and consequences of sin, to confirm his enmity to it. Moreover, he was then in the exercise of his highest act of obedience or holiness, which, tending to increase the principle, the bringing forth of such great and abundant fruit, tended to strengthen and increase the root. Those last sufferings of Christ, were in some respect like a fire to refine the gold. For, though the furnace purged away no dross or filthiness, yet it increased the preciousness of the gold; it added to the finite holiness of the human nature of Christ. Hence Christ calls his offering himself up, his sanctifying himself: John xvii. 19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." Hence he calls those last sufferings a baptism that he was to be baptized with. It was a baptism to him in two respects, as it purged him from imputed guilt, and as it increased his holiness by

the Spirit of God that gave him those terrible but sanctifying views. And so this is one way in which the Captain of our salvation is made perfect by sufferings; Heb. ii. 10, and v. 9, and Luke xiii. 32. Thus Christ, before he was glorified, was prepared for that high degree of glory and joy he was to be exalted to, by being first sanctified in the furnace.

II. Another way in which it was possible that Christ should endure the wrath of God was, to endure the effects of that wrath. All that he suffered was by the special ordering of God. There was a very visible hand of God in letting men and devils loose upon him at such a rate, and in separating from him his own disciples. Thus it pleased the Father to bruise him and put him to grief. God dealt with him as if he had been exceedingly angry with him, and as though he had been the object of his dreadful wrath. This made all the sufferings of Christ the more terrible to him, because they were from the hand of his Father, whom he infinitely loved, and whose infinite love he had had eternal experience of. Besides, it was an effect of God's wrath, that he forsook Christ. This caused Christ to cry out once and again, "*My God, my God*, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was infinitely terrible to Christ. Christ's knowledge of the glory of the Father, and his love to the Father, and the sense and experience he had had of the worth of the Father's love to him, made the withholding the pleasant ideas and manifestations of his Father's love, as terrible to him, as the sense and knowledge of his hatred is to the damned, that have no knowledge of God's excellency, no love to him, nor any experience of the infinite sweetness of his love.

It was a special fruit of the wrath of God against our sins, that he let loose upon Christ the devil, who has the power of death, is God's executioner, and the roaring lion that devours the damned in hell. Christ was given up to the devil as his captive for a season. This antitype of Jonah was thrown to this great leviathan, to be swallowed up as his prey. The time of Christ's suffering, was the time of the prevalency of the power of the devil, wherein Christ was delivered up to that power, as is implied in Luke xxii. 53: "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness." And therefore, when Christ's last sufferings were approaching, Christ said, John xiv. 30, "The Prince of this world cometh." He was let loose to torment the soul of Christ with gloomy and dismal ideas. He probably did his utmost to contribute to raise his ideas of the torments of hell.

§ 10. That God should all along require sacrifices in his church, and that something should be done by all that came near to him and worshipped him, or appeared in his presence to make atonement for their sins; insomuch that sacrificing obtained throughout the world in all nations and ages; and that such a multitude of sacrifices should be appointed; that sacrifices should be offered so continually, and on so many occasions, and joined with all their public worship; was a plain testimony of God, that a real atonement or satisfaction to his justice was necessary, and that God did not design, that, in his manner of dealing with mankind, men should be pardoned and accepted without atonement. And if there was nothing of true and real atonement and sacrifice, in those beasts that were offered, then doubtless they were an evidence, that there was to be some other greater sacrifice, that was to be a proper atonement or satisfaction, of which they were only the presage and signs; as those symbolical actions which God sometimes commanded the prophets to perform, were signs and presages of great events which they foretold.

God abundantly testified by the sacrifices from the beginning of the world

that an atonement for sin was necessary, and must be insisted on in order to his acceptance of the sinner. This proves that a sacrifice of infinite value was necessary, and that God would accept of no other.

For an atonement that bears no proportion to the offence, is no atonement. An atonement carries in it a payment or satisfaction in the very notion of it. And if satisfaction was so little necessary, that the Divine Majesty easily admitted one that bears no proportion at all to the offence, i. e., was wholly equivalent to nothing, when compared with the offence, and so was no payment or satisfaction at all; then he might have forgiven sin without any atonement; and an atonement could not be so greatly to be insisted upon, as is represented by all the prodigious expense and labor, and multitude of services, and ceremonies, and so great an apparatus, and so great pomp, which, with so much exactness, were prescribed to be continued through so many ages, respecting their typical sacrifices and atonements, and from God's church were propagated through the world of mankind.

That no mere creature could offer to God that true sacrifice of real atonement, of which the Old Testament sacrifices were resemblances or shadows, is evident by the Old Testament. For by the Old Testament it is evident, that that is not sufficient to be looked upon by God as any real atonement or sacrifice for sin, which is God's before it is offered to him. In the fiftieth Psalm we have a prophecy of Christ's coming to set up his kingdom in the world. There, it is said in the 5th and following verses, "Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (where we may observe that the necessity of sacrifice is implied). "And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself. Selah. Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." But no mere creature can have any thing to offer to God, which is not his already; for all that he has is God's gift to him.

§ 11. That Christ indeed suffered the full punishment of the sin that was imputed to him, or offered that to God that was fully and completely equivalent to what we owed to divine justice for our sins, is evident by Psalm lxix. 5, "Oh God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins" (my *guiltiness* it is in the Hebrew) "are not hid from thee." That the person that is the subject of this Psalm, and that is here speaking, is the Messiah, is evident from many places in the New Testament, in which it is applied to Christ; as John xv. 25, and John ii. 17, and Rom. xv. 3, 2 Cor. vi. 2, John xix. 28, 29, 30, with Matt. xxvii. 34, 48, and Mark xv. 23, and Rom. xi. 9, 10, Acts i. 20. And by the Psalm itself, especially when compared with other Psalms and prophecies of the Old Testament, it is plain, that David in this Psalm did not speak in his own name, but in the name of the Messiah.—*See of the Prophecies of the Messiah, a manuscript of the Author, to be published in a succeeding volume of these Miscellanies.*

But if it be the Messiah that is here speaking, then by the sin and guiltiness that he here speaks of, must be intended, not sin that he himself committed, but that sin that was laid upon him, or that he took upon him, spoken of Isaiah liii. And when Christ says, "O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my guiltiness

is not hid from thee;" thereby must be meant, that God did not forgive that which was imputed to him, but punished it. When God forgives sin, and does not execute panishment for it, then he is said not to behold iniquity, nor see perverseness; and to cover and hide, and bury their sins, so that they cannot be seen or found; and to turn away his face from beholding them, and not to remember them any more. But when God does not remit sin, but punishes it, then, in the language of the Old Testament, he is said to find out their sins, to set them before him in the light of his countenance, to remember them, to bring them to remembrance, and to know them. And therefore, when it is said here, "O God, thou shalt know my foolishness, and my guiltiness hast thou not hid;" thereby is intended, that he forgives nothing to the Messiah, but beholds all his guiltiness by imputed sin, has set all in the light of his countenance, and does not cover or hide the least part of it.

§ 12. Satisfaction for sin must be complete. God declares, that those sinners that are not forgiven, shall pay the uttermost farthing, and the last mite; and that all the debt shall be exacted of them, &c. Now, it seems unreasonable to suppose, that God, in case of a surety, and of his insisting on an atonement made by him, will show mercy by releasing the surety without a full atonement, any more than that he will show mercy to the sinner that is punished, by not insisting on the complete punishment.

§ 13. Christ's knowing his own infinite dignity and glory, and having it in view in the time of his humiliation, is mentioned as a circumstance that is important and of great consequence in that humiliation: John xiii. 3, 4, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God," &c.

§ 14. "Those expressions of the apostle [concerning Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, and the operations of the Spirit], are to be understood in the common sense and meaning of the words, and not as far-fetched metaphors. For it is evident, that in all this he does not affect the arts of oratory, nor assume a magnificent air of writing, nor does he raise himself into sublimity of style, nor rant in an enthusiastic manner, when he treats of these subjects. But while he is explaining to us these great things of the gospel, he avoids the wisdom of words and oratory, and he talks in a plain, rational, argumentative method, to inform the minds of men, and give them the clearest knowledge of the truth." *Watts's Orthodoxy and Charity.*

§ 15. Let us consider how a perfectly wise, holy, and disinterested Arbiter, whose office it should be to regulate all things within the whole compass of existence according to the most perfect propriety, would determine, in case the creature should injure the Most High, should cast contempt on the majesty, and trample on the anthority of the infinite Lord of the universe: whether he would not determine, that in such a case the injury should be repaired, his majesty vindicated, and the sacredness of the authority thoroughly supported; and that it was very requisite, in order to things being regulated and disposed most fitly and beautifully, that such injuries should not be forgiven in the neglect of this, or without due care taken of this matter. If it be fit that the honor of God's majesty should be maintained at all in any degree (which I suppose none will deny), then why is it not most fit that it should be maintained fully? If it would be quite improper and unsuitable, that the dignity of the Supreme Being, the sacredness of the authority of the infinitely great Governor of the world, should be entirely neglected, should be suffered at all times, and to the greatest degree, to be trampled on, without any care to defend or support it; and that the majesty of this great King, as to the manifestation of it, should

be obscured by his enemies to the greatest degree, and that continually and forever, without any vindication or reparation at all; then why is it not most suitable and most becoming, that the vindication of it should be thorough, and the reparation complete and perfect?

What has been observed, may serve to show the reasonableness of the doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ; and that it is most rational to suppose, that if God did determine to forgive such as had cast contempt on his infinite majesty, and on his authority, as the infinitely high Lord over all, and to take such into favor, infinite wisdom would some way or other so contrive the matter, that the injury done to the appearance or exhibition of the dignity and sacred authority of the great King, should be fully repaired, and his majesty entirely vindicated, and set forth in all awfulness, inviolable sacredness and worthiness of regard and reverence. It cannot here be reasonably objected, that God is not capable of properly receiving any satisfaction for an injury, because he is not capable of receiving any benefit; that a price offered to men satisfies for an injury, because it may truly be a price to them, or a thing valuable and beneficial; but that God is not capable of receiving a benefit. For God is as capable of receiving satisfaction, as injury. It is true he cannot be properly profited; so neither can he be properly hurt. But as rebelling against him, may properly be looked upon as of the nature of an injury or wrong done to God, and so God is capable, in some proper sense, of being the object of injuriousness; so he is as capable of being the object of that which is the opposite of injuriousness, or the repairing of an injury. If you say, what need is there that God have any care for repairing the honor of his majesty, when it can do him no good, and no addition can be made to his happiness by it? You might as well say, what need is there that God care when he is despised and dishonored, and his authority and glory trampled on; since it does him no hurt? It is a vain thing here to pretend, that God cares only, because it hurts creatures' own happiness for them to cast contempt on God. Is that agreeable to the natural light of all men's minds, to the natural sense of their hearts, and to the dictates of conscience, which unavoidably and necessarily arise, after some very direct, most profane, and daring opposition to, and reproach of the Most High, that God is now angry and much provoked, only because the audacious sinner has now greatly hurt himself, and hurt his neighbors, that happen to see him? No, this is entirely diverse from the voice of natural sense in such a case, which inevitably suggests, that God is provoked, as one will regard himself for himself, as having a direct respect for his dignity and majesty. And this is agreeable to the strictest reason. It is impossible, if God infinitely loves and honors himself, as one infinitely worthy to be loved and esteemed, but that he should, from the same principle, proportionably abhor and oppose opposition to himself, and contempt of himself. And if it be in its own nature decent and proper for him thus to love himself, then it is in its own nature fit and becoming in him to hate opposition to himself. And for the same reason, and from the same principle, God, when he is contemned and injured, and his authority and glory are trampled in the dust, will be disposed to repair the injury done to his honor, and raise his injured majesty out of the dust again.

§ 17. The satisfaction of Christ, by suffering the punishment of sin, is properly to be distinguished, as being in its own nature different from the merit of Christ. For merit is only some excellency or worth. But when we consider Christ's sufferings merely as the satisfaction for the guilt of another, the excellency of Christ's act in suffering, does not at all come into consideration; but only those two things, viz., their equality or equivalence to the punishment that

the sinner deserved; and, *2dly*, the union between him and them, or the propriety of his being accepted in suffering, as the representative of the sinner. Christ's bearing our punishment for us, is not properly meriting that we should not bear it any more than, if it had been possible for us ourselves to have borne it all, that would have been meriting that we should not be punished any more. Christ's sufferings do not satisfy by any excellency in them, but by a fulfilment. To satisfy by a fulfilment, and to satisfy by worthiness or excellency, are different things. If the law be fulfilled, there is no need of any excellency or merit to satisfy it; because it is satisfied by taking place and having its course. Indeed, how far the dignity or worthiness of Christ's person comes into consideration, in determining the propriety of his being accepted as a representative of sinners, so that his suffering, when equivalent, can be accepted as theirs, may be matter of question and debate; but it is a matter entirely foreign to the present purpose.

§ 18. The blood of Christ washes away sin. So it is represented in the Scripture, that we are washed from our filthiness in Christ's blood. Whereas, although the blood of Christ washes from our *guilt*, yet it is the Spirit of Christ that washes from the *pollution* and *stain* of sin. However the blood of Christ washes also from the filth of sin, as it purchases sanctification; it makes way for it by satisfying, and purchases it by the merit of obedience implied in it. The sacrifices under the law, typified Christ's sacrifice, not only as a satisfaction, but as meritorious obedience. They are called a sweet savor upon both these accounts. And therefore we find obedience compared with sacrifice, Psal. xl. 6, &c.

The sacrifice of Christ is a sweet savor, because as such it was a great honor done to God's majesty, holiness and law, and a glorious expression and testimony of Christ's respect to that majesty, &c. That when he loved man, and so greatly desired his salvation, he had yet so great respect to that majesty and holiness of God, that he had rather die than that the salvation of man should be any injury or dishonor unto those attributes. And then, *2dly*, it was a sweet savor, as it was a marvellous act of obedience, and some expression of a wonderful respect to God's authority. The value of Christ's sacrifice was infinite, both as a propitiation, and as an act of obedience; because he showed an infinite regard to the majesty, holiness, &c., of God, in being at infinite expense from regard to those divine attributes.

§ 19. The sacrifices under the law are said to be most holy; but the sacrifice of Christ may properly be said to be infinitely holy, as it was an expression of an infinite regard to the holiness, majesty, &c., of God.

§ 20. Late philosophers seem ready enough to own the great importance of God's maintaining steady and inviolable the laws of the natural world. It may be worthy to be considered, whether it is not of as great, or greater importance, that the law of God, that great rule of righteousness between the supreme moral Governor and his subjects, should be maintained inviolate.

§ 21. If the threatening of death be not executed, the devil's horrid suggestion, and our first parents' wise suspicion, will be verified and fulfilled; viz., that God said otherwise than what he knew, when he threatened, *Thou shalt surely die.*

§ 22 "Had God violated his word in the threatening of death for sin, he had justified the devil in his arguments for man's rebellion. The devils' argument is a plain contradiction to God's threatening. God affirms the certainty of death; the devil affirms the certainty of life. Gen. iii. 4, "Ye shall not surely die." Had no punishment been inflicted, the devil had not been a liar from the beginning. God would have honored the tempter, and justified the

charge he brought against him, and owned that envy the devil accused him of, and thereby have rendered the devil the fittest object for love and trust. As the devil charged God with a lie; so, had no punishment been inflicted, God would have condemned himself, and declared Satan, instead of a lying tempter, to be the truest counsellor. He had exposed himself to contempt, and advanced the credit of his enemy, and so set up the devil as God instead of himself. It concerned God therefore to manifest himself true, and the devil a liar, and acquaint the world, that not himself, but the evil spirit, was their deceiver; and that he meant as he spoke." *Charnock*, vol. 2. p 934.

As to any objection that may be made against the force of the foregoing arguments, from the practice of all, and even the wisest of human legislators, their dispensing with their own laws, and forbearing to execute them, and pardoning offenders, without any one's being made to suffer in their stead; the case is vastly different in the Supreme Lawgiver and subordinate lawgivers, and in the Supreme Judge and subordinate judges. The case is vastly different in them that give rules only to a certain small part of the commonwealth of moral agents, and with relation only to some few of their concerns, and for a little while—in lawgivers that are weak and fallible, and very imperfect in the exercises of a limited, subordinate, and infinitely inferior authority; from what it is in him, who is the great, infinitely wise, omniscient, holy, and absolutely perfect, Rector of all; to whom it belongs to establish a rule for the regulation of the whole university of beings, throughout all eternity, in all that concerns them in the exercise of an infinitely strong right of supreme, absolute dominion and sovereignty. The laws of men may be dispensed with, who cannot foresee all cases that may happen; and, if they could, have not both the laws and the state of the subject perfectly at their own disposal, so that it is possible for them universally and perfectly to suit one to the other. And moreover, there is a superior law, i. e., the divine law, that all are subject to, and a superior tribunal, to which all are obnoxious; to which inferior tribunals, when the exigence of affairs, or any thing extraordinary in the case requires it, may refer offenders, dispensing with inferior subordinate laws made by men. But there is no wise and good law, but that care should be taken that it ordinarily be put in execution: and the nearer any human law approaches to the supreme or divine law in perfection, and in extent of jurisdiction, the more care should be taken of its execution: the wisdom of nations teaches this. And besides, persons' repentance may be proportionable and answerable, at least in some measure, to offences against men. And as to the public truth which is to be upheld in execution of the threatenings of human laws, there ought to be great care to uphold it, according to the true intent and meaning of those threatenings. If all that is meant by them, and all that, by the very nature of the public constitution (that is the foundation on which all their laws stand), is to be understood by those threatenings, is, that the punishment shall be inflicted, excepting when the exigence of the public requires otherwise, or when the pleasure of the prince is otherwise; then the public truth obliges to no more; and this being done, the public truth is maintained.

CHAPTER III

CONCERNING THE ENDLESS PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WHO DIE IMPENITENT.

§ 1. OBJECTIONS *of modern libertines against the Scripture evidences of future punishment, taken from an anonymous pamphlet on that subject.*

The word *Gehenna* signifies only the *Valley of Hinnom*. That fire was said to be everlasting, because it was kept burning night and day.

The words *ever* and *everlasting* the Greeks understand for an age.

The word *everlasting* is commonly used in the law of Moses for a limited time.

That fire is said to be durable, or everlasting, that goes not out till the fuel is consumed.

The fire that consumed Sodom and Gomorrah, is called eternal fire.

If the fire is everlasting, it will not follow, that what is cast into it is everlasting. But the wicked are compared to chaff and stubble, which is quickly burnt up.

The Scripture often uses very hyperbolical expressions.

§. 2. *The objections of Mr. Whiston; several of which are the same with those mentioned above.*

That the words in the New Testament, translated *everlasting* and *eternal*, are sometimes used concerning things of a temporary duration.

That the use of the same word in both cases, viz., in both the future reward of the saints and punishment of the wicked, does not imply the equal duration of the punishment and the reward. Because some of the precepts of the law of Moses are called everlasting, that are moral, and shall continue to the end of the world; others are so called, using the same word, that were only to last till the Christian church was established.

That if the words *eternal* and *everlasting* do signify a proper eternity, when applied to the punishment of the wicked, it may mean only an everlasting privation of being

That the fire, and smoke, and worm, &c., may be eternal, and yet the pain not be eternal, because the wicked may be consumed, and so their pain be at an end.

That Christ speaks of them that blaspheme the Holy Ghost, as those that shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor the world to come; implying that others shall be forgiven in the world to come

That Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, i. e., preached the gospel to the departed souls of the wicked, in order to their salvation.

That αιων in the New Testament signifies an age; that αιωνες των αιωνων signifies, ages of ages.

That αιδιος is used for a limited time, when, in Jude 6th, the devils are said to be reserved in everlasting chains; where the chains spoken of last no longer than the day of judgment.

That some shall be beaten with many stripes; others with few: which must naturally mean, that some shall suffer longer than others

That eternity of punishment is inconsistent with the divine attributes, and therefore cannot be proved by any pretended revelation.

That the eternal misery of sinners can be no advantage to God, to themselves, or to others.

That it is inconsistent with God's mercy.

That it is inconsistent with justice, to punish men eternally for their sinning during this short life.

That the threatening such a punishment will do no good, because, if men will not be deterred from sin by the expectation of a great temporary punishment, neither would they by the expectation of eternal misery.

§ 3. *Evidences of the doctrine.*

The word everlasting is used in the very sentence of the Judge at the last day, whom we cannot suppose to use rhetorical tropes and figures. The punishment of the devil will doubtless be eternal. But the wicked shall be sentenced to the same everlasting fire.

The wicked that are finally impenitent, are represented as wholly cast away, lost, made no account of, &c., which is quite inconsistent with their punishment being medicinal, and for their good and purification, and to fit them for final and eternal happiness.

Eternal punishment is not eternal annihilation. Surely they will not be raised to life the last day, only to be annihilated. "The words used to signify the duration of the punishment of the wicked, do, in their etymology, truly signify a proper eternity; and if they are sometimes used in a less strict sense, when the nature of the thing requires it, yet that can never pass as any reason why they are not to be understood absolutely, when the subject is capable of it. They are terms the most expressive of an endless duration, of any that can be used or imagined. And they always signify so far positively endless, as to be express against any other period or conclusion, than what arises from the nature of the thing. They are never used in Scripture in any other limited sense, than to exclude all positive abolition, annihilation, or conclusion, other than what the natural intent or constitution of the subject spoken of must necessarily admit. The word αιωνιος, which is the word generally used by the sacred writers, is, we know, derived from the adverb αει, which signifies forever, and cannot without force be used in any lower sense. And particularly, this is the word by which the eternal and immutable attributes of Deity are several times expressed." *Dodwell's Sermon in answer to Whiston*, p. 15, 16.

Those words which Christ spoke concerning Judas, are a demonstration of the eternity of the misery of hell—"Good had it been for that man that he had not been born," Matt. xxvi. 44.

On the supposition that God intends finally to deliver all mankind from misery, and make all intelligent creatures eternally happy at last; and that to suppose the contrary (viz., the everlasting continuance of the torments of hell) is so extremely derogatory to God's moral character, and represents him in such black and odious colors, and as so cruel a being: why have not Christ and his apostles, who have revealed a future and eternal world so clearly, and brought life and immortality to light; I say, why have they not declared this doctrine, when speaking of future punishment, and clearly revealed this glorious doctrine of such a universal eternal salvation, so much more evangelical and agreeable to the office of Christ as a Saviour, and the design of his coming into the world?

§ 4. *Axiom* 1. If the torments of hell are purifying pains, that purge the damned from their sins, it must be by bringing them to repentance, convincing them of the evil of sin, and inducing them to forsake it, and with a sincere heart to turn from sin to God, and heartily to choose and walk in the ways of virtue and holiness. There is no other way for sinners being purged as moral agents; and, if hell fire is the means of any other purification, it cannot be

a moral purification. These flames do not purge from sin, and bring to virtue of heart and life, merely as a hot fire purges metals from dross, and senseless dead lumps of matter from material filth. But the defilement which they purge from, is defilement of heart or will; and the purity which they bring to, must be purity of will, intention, choice, and the active faculties and principles.

Axiom 2. If the wicked in hell are the subjects of torments there, in order to their purification, and so being fitted for, and finally brought to eternal happiness; then they are the subjects of a dispensation, that is truly a dispensation of love, and of divine and infinite goodness and benevolence, towards them.

Axiom 3. If the design of the pains of hell be that of kind and benevolent chastisement, to bring sinners to repentance, and a yielding to God's authority, and compliance with the divine will; then we cannot suppose that they will be continued after the sinner has repented, and is actually brought to yield and comply. For that would be to continue them for no purpose; to go on using means and endeavors to obtain the end when the end is accomplished, and the thing aimed at is fully obtained already.

§ 5. If the damned, after many ages suffering extreme torment in hell, are to be delivered, and made perfectly and eternally happy, then they must be in a state of probation during this long season of their confinement to such extreme misery.

If they are not in a state of probation, or on any trial how they will behave themselves under these severe and terrible inflictions of wrath, but are to be delivered, and made eternally happy at the end of a certain period; then what restraints are they under from giving an unbounded loose and license to their wickedness, in expressions of enmity against God, in cursing and blaspheming, and whatever their hearts are inclined to? And if they are in such a state as this, wherein they are thus left to unrestrained wickedness, and every curb to their most wicked inclination is taken off, being nevertheless sure of deliverance and everlasting happiness; how far is this state fit to be a state of purgation of rational creatures and moral agents from sin, being a state wherein they are so far from means of repentance, reformation, and entirely reclaiming and purging them from sin, that all manner of means are rather removed; and so much is every restraint taken off, that they are given up wholly to sin, which, instead, of purifying them, will tend above all things that can be conceived, to harden them in sin, and desperately establish the habits of it?

A state of purgation of moral agents, that is, a state to bring sinners to repentance and reformation, and not a state of trial, is a gross absurdity. If any should say, that, though we should maintain that the pains of hell are purifying pains, to bring sinners to repentance, in order to their deliverance and eternal happiness; yet there will be no necessity of supposing, either that they may sin with impunity, and so without restraint; or that they are properly in a state of probation: for they have no probation whether they shall finally have eternal happiness, because it is absolutely determined by the benevolent Creator, concerning his intelligent creatures, that they shall finally be brought to a state of happiness: but yet their circumstances may be such as may tend greatly to restrain their wickedness, because the case with them may be thus, that the time of their torment shall be longer or shorter, according as they behave themselves under their chastisements more or less perversely; or that their torment shall be raised to a greater height, and addi-

tions be made in proportion to the wickedness they commit in their purgatory flames. To this, I answer: Even on this supposition they are in a state of probation for a more speedy possession of eternal life and happiness, and deliverance from further misery and punishment; this makes their state as much a state of probation, as their state in the present life. For here it is supposed by these men, that sinners are not in a state of trial, whether ever they shall obtain eternal happiness or no; because that is absolutely determined, and the determination known or knowable concerning all without any trial. But only it is a state of trial whether they shall obtain eternal life so soon as at the end of their lives, or at the day of judgment. Neither have they any trial during this life, whether they shall escape all affliction and chastisement for sin or not; but whether they shall be relieved from a state of suffering so soon, and shall escape those severer and longer chastisements that, with respect to many, are to come afterwards. And on the supposition of the objection, there must be the proper circumstances of a state of probation in hell, as well as on earth. There they must likewise be continued in that state of free agency, that renders them properly the subjects of judgment and retribution For on the supposition of the objection, they shall be punished for their wickedness in hell, by an addition to their misery proportioned to their sin; and they shall be the subjects of God's merciful strivings, endeavors, and means to bring them to repentance, as well as here. And there must be a divine judgment after the trial, to determine their retribution, as much as after this life. And the same, or like things, must be determined by the Supreme Judge, as will be determined at the day of judgment. At that great day on the supposition of such as I oppose, what will be determined concerning the impenitent? not what their eternal state shall be, but only whether they must have eternal happiness immediately; whether they have repented, and are qualified for immediate admission to heavenly glory, or, whether the bestowment of it shall be delayed, and farther chastisements made use of, and so it must be again after their castigatory purifying pains. At the end of all, there must be a judgment, whether now they truly repent, and so have performed the condition of deliverance, and immediate admission to the state of the blessed, or whether there shall be a further season of misery; which brings it in all respects to be a proper judgment, as much as that at the general resurrection; and the preceding time of the use of means and God's striving with them to bring them to repentance, is as much a proper time of trial in order to judgment, as the time of this life.

§ 6. But if it be so, that the damned are in a state of trial, let it be considered how unreasonable this is.

If they are in a state of trial, then they must be in a state of liberty and moral agency, as those men will doubtless own; and so, according to their notion of liberty, must be under no necessity of continuing in their rebellion and wickedness, but may cast away their abominations, and turn to God and their duty, in a thorough subjection to his will, very speedily. And then, seeing the end of their probationary state, and the severe means God uses with them to bring them to repentance, is obtained; how unreasonable will it be to suppose, that God, after this, would continue them still under hell torments for a long succession of ages? But if not so, but God should speedily deliver them on their speedy repentance; how are the threatenings and predictions of their everlasting punishment fulfilled in any sense, according to the sense even of those who deny the absolute eternity of the misery of hell, and hold that the words *everlasting* and *forever*, &c., when applied

to the misery of the damned, are not to be taken in the strictest sense? They yet allow they signify a very long time, a great many ages.

§ 7. If the devils and damned spirits are in a state of probation, and have liberty of will, and are under the last and most extreme means to bring them to repentance, and consequently the greatest means, having the strongest tendency of all to be effectual, I say, if thus, then it is possible that the greatest part, if not all of them, may be reclaimed by those extreme means, and may be brought to thorough repentance before the day of judgment; yea, it is possible, it might be very soon. And, if so, how could it certainly be predicted concerning the devil, that he would do such and such great things in opposition to Christ and his church, from age to age? and that at last he should be judged and punished, and have God's wrath more terribly executed upon him? as, Rev. xx. 10: "And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever. And how is it said in Scripture, that when he fell, he was cast down from heaven, and reserved under chains of darkness unto judgment? The expression seems naturally to signify strong and irrefragable bonds, which admit of no comfort or hope of escape. And besides, a being reserved in chains unto judgment, is not consistent with the appointment of another time of trial and opportunity to escape the judgment and condemnation. It is said, Jude 6, "They are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." And if any of the separate souls of the wicked, that are in the case that the soul of the rich man was in, when he died and lift up his eyes in hell being in torments, should repent and be delivered before the day of judgment, and so should appear at the right hand among the righteous at that day, then how could that be verified, 2 Cor. v. 10, "For we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether good or bad?" And we have reason to think, that the time of standing before the judgment seat of Christ, which the apostle has a special respect to, is the day of judgment, if we compare this with other Scriptures; as that of the same apostle, Acts xvii. 31: "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." And many other places.

§ 8. And how does their being in a state of trial, many of them for so many ages after death before the day of judgment, during all which time they have opportunity to repent, consist with those words of Christ, Mark viii. 38, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels?" How is their continuing in a state of trial from the time of that generation, and from the end of their lives to the day of judgment, consistent with its being declared to them from God beforehand, that they shall certainly be condemned at the day of judgment? or, with Christ's certifying them beforehand, that whatever trial they shall have, whatever opportunity God should give them for repentance and pardon, for so many ages, all would be in vain; which in effect is passing the sentence.

We may argue in like manner, from those words, Matt. x. 14, 15: "And whosoever shall not receive you, and hear your words—Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." So Matt. xi. 21, 22: "Wo unto thee, Chorazin, wo unto thee, Bethsaida—I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable

for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell.—I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." Two things may be noted in these sayings of Christ.

(1.) It is here declared what the state of those obstinate unbelievers should be at the day of judgment, for their wickedness here in the body, with an asseveration *I say unto you.* And sentence indeed is passed beforehand upon them by their Judge, concerning the punishment that shall be executed upon them at the day of judgment. The declaration is made in the form of a solemn denunciation or sentence: *Wo unto thee, Chorazin, wo unto thee, Bethsaida,* &c. And, is it reasonable to suppose, that the very Judge that is to judge them at the end of the world, would peremptorily declare, that they should not escape punishment at the day of judgment; yea, solemnly denounce sentence upon them, dooming them to the distinguished punishment they should then suffer for their obstinacy in their lifetime; and yet appoint another time of trial, of a great many hundred years between their death and the day of judgment, wherein they should have opportunity to escape that punishment?

(2.) It is here also to be observed, that the wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah should be condemned to misery at the day of judgment, though they had already been in their purifying flames, and in a state of probation, under the most powerful means to bring them to repentance for 1900 years, and should be after that for more than 1700 years. So we may argue, from Rom. ii. 3—12, 16, where the apostle speaks of men's treasuring up wrath against *the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,* by their abusing the day wherein God exercises towards them the riches of his goodness, forbearance and long-suffering, which should lead them to repentance; plainly intimating, verse 6th, that the Judge in that day would render unto every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, &c., eternal life; but to them who are contentious, &c., tribulation and wrath, &c. And that as many as sinned without law, should perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, should be judged by the law: which plainly shows that they are to be judged according to their deeds during this life, wherein alone there is this distinction of some sinning without the law, and some sinning in the law. And then in verse 16, the apostle repeatedly tells us, when these things shall be, that men shall thus receive their retribution; "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel;" which shows that this life is the only state of trial, and that all men shall be judged at the end of the world according to their behavior in this life, and not according to their behavior in another state of trial, between this life and that day; which, with respect to most, will be so vastly longer than this life; and when they (as is supposed) will be under more powerful means to bring them to repentance. So, it is apparent, by 2 Thess. i. 5—9 "Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God—seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. —When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction," &c Here it is manifest, that all that are obstinate unbelievers, rejecters of the gospel, and persecutors of believers, shall, at the day of judgment, be punished with everlasting destruction. So that no room is left for a state of trial, and a space to repent before that time for ages in hell. So it is apparent, Matt. xxv, that none will be found at the right hand, but they that have done

such good works, as can be done only in this world; which would not be declared beforehand, if there was an opportunity given for millions of others to obtain that privilege.

§ 9. If it should be supposed (however unreasonably), that though it be already declared by a peremptory sentence of the Judge, that all sinners continuing obstinate during this life, should be condemned at the day of judgment, still this is consistent with their being in a state of probation, in order to escaping condemnation during the space between death and the general judgment: Yet the account which the Scripture gives of that day, in several of those forementioned texts, is inconsistent with men's being in a state of trial during that space. For, if they are in a state of trial during this space, then they are accountable for their ill improvement of that space, and the proper subjects of judgment and condemnation for their wickedness during that space; and so those works would come into the account, when they appear at the great judgment, as well as those done in the body, which would be no more done during a state of probation than the former. This is not consistent with every one's receiving according to the things done in the body, or in proportion to the guilt that every one contracted then. It is inconsistent with the description Christ gives of the day of judgment in the 25th of Matthew, where Christ says not only to them on his right hand, I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, &c.—and the good works are all such as are done only in this world; but all the wickedness which those are condemned for, who are at the left hand, is such as is committed in this life *only*.

§ 10. It may be proved, that the day of man's trial, and the time of God's striving in the use of means to bring him to repentance, and waiting for his repentance under the use of means, will not be continued after this life, from those words, Gen. vi. 3, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be 120 years." It is as much as to say, that it is not fit that this day of trial and opportunity should last always to obstinate, perverse sinners. It is fit some bounds should be set to my striving and waiting on such as abuse the day of my patience; and that merciful means and gracious calls should not be continued, without limits, to them that trample all means and mercies under foot, and turn a deaf ear to all calls and invitations, and treat them with constant contempt. Therefore I will fix a certain limit, I will set their bounds to 120 years: when, if they repent not, I will put an end to all their lives, and with their lives shall be an end of my striving and waiting. This, which in Genesis is called *God's Spirit striving*, is by the apostle Peter expressed, by *the waiting of the long-suffering of God*, 1 Pet. iii. 20. But, according to the doctrine we are opposing, instead of God's striving and using means to bring those wicked men to repentance, and waiting in the use of striving and endeavors 120 years, or to the end of their lives, and no longer; he has gone on still since that, for above 4000 years, striving with them in the use of more powerful means to bring them to repentance, and waiting on them, and will continue to do so for so long a time afterwards, that the time is often called everlasting, and represented as enduring forever and ever.

§ 11. Those words of Christ, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh wherein no man can work," John ix. 4, prove that there is no other day of trial after this life. Christ having undertaken for us, and taken on him our nature, and appearing in the form of a servant, and standing as our surety and representative, had a great work appointed him of God to do in this life for eternity. He could not obtain eternal

life and happiness for himself any other way, than by doing that work in this life, which was the time of his probation for eternity, as well as ours. And therefore his words imply as much as if he had said, I must do that work which God has appointed me to do for eternity, that great service which must be done, as I would be eternally happy, now while the day of life lasts, which is the only day appointed for the trial of man's faithfulness in the service of God, in order to his being accepted to eternal rewards. Death is coming, which will be the setting of the sun, and the end of this day; after which no work will remain, nothing to be done that will be of any significance in order to the obtaining of the recompense of eternal felicity.

§ 12. And doubtless to the same purpose is that in Eccles. ix., "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work" (or no man can work), "nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." As much as to say, after this life, nothing can be done, nothing invented or devised in order to your happiness; no wisdom or art will serve you to any such purpose, if you neglect the time of the present life. It is unreasonable to suppose the wise man means only that we should in this life do all that we can in temporal concerns, and to promote our temporal interest, and that nothing can be done towards this after this life: not only as this would be an observation of very little importance, it being as flat and impertinent as if he had said, whatever your hand finds to do this year, do it with your might; for nothing that you do or devise the next year, will signify any thing to promote your interest and happiness this year: but also because the wise man himself, in the conclusion of this book, informs us, that his drift through the whole book is, to induce us to do a spiritual work; to fear God and keep his commandments, in order, not to happiness in this life (which he tells us through the book is never to be expected), but in order to a future happiness and retribution in consequence of a judgment to come; chap. xii. 13, 14, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God, and keep his commandments. For this is the whole" (i. e. the whole business, the whole concern) "of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

§ 13. If the wicked in hell are in a state of trial, under severe chastisements, as means in order to their repentance and obtaining the benefit of God's favor in eternal rewards, then these things will follow. 1. That they are in a state of such freedom as makes them moral agents, and the proper subjects of judgment and retribution. 2. It will also follow, seeing that the torments of hell which they suffer, being the last means God uses, or such as will be effectual after all other means have failed or proved utterly ineffectual, so that it appeared in vain to use them any longer, so that there was no other way left, than to have recourse to those severe means which will finally be effectual with every one, will bow all their hearts, and thoroughly purge their minds, and bring them to repentance; I say, if this be the case, then it is evident, that those terrible chastisements are made use of as the most powerful means of all, more efficacious than all the means used in this life which prove ineffectual, and which proving insufficient to overcome sinners' obstinacy, and prevail with their hard hearts, God is compelled to relinquish them all, and have recourse to those torments as the last means, the most effectual and powerful. 3. If the torments of hell are to last a very long time, ages of ages, the torments of the sinners of the old world till the end of the world, and after that so long, that the time is often and almost constantly represented figuratively as everlasting, lasting forever and ever; then it must be because sinners in hell all this while

are obstinate; and though they are free agents as to this matter, yet wilfully and perversely refuse, even under such great means, to repent, forsake their sins, and turn to God. If the end of their torment is to bring them to repentance, it is unreasonable to suppose that they will be continued under their torments after they are brought to repentance. They must therefore frowardly go on in their rebellion, enmity and opposition to the great God, whose power they feel in their misery; who continues with the greatest peremptoriness to command them to forsake their sins, and submit to him immediately without delay; adding withal severe chastisements and terrible torments to bow their wills and bring them to compliance. They must with desperate hardness of heart refuse to return to their duty, though they feel the dreadful effects of this refusal, and know, that by persisting in it, they must continue to groan under them for ages more. And, 4. It must be farther supposed, that all this is while they not only suffer these dreadful chastisements for their obstinacy, and know they must suffer them till they comply, though it be ever so many millions of ages; but also that they have the offers of immediate mercy, and deliverance made to them, if they will comply. Now, if this be the case, and they shall go on in such wickedness, and continue in such extreme obstinacy and pertinaciousness, for so many ages (as is supposed, by its being thought their torments shall be so long continued), how desperately will their guilt be increased! How many thousand times more guilty at the end of the term, than at the beginning! And therefore they will be much the more proper objects of divine severity, deserving God's wrath, and still a thousand times more severe or longer continued chastisements than the past; and therefore it is not reasonable to suppose, that all the damned should be delivered from misery, and received to God's favor, and made the subjects of eternal salvation and glory at that time, when they are many thousand times more unworthy of it, more deserving of continuance in misery, than when they were first cast into hell. It is not likely that the infinitely wise God should so order the matter. And if their misery should be augmented, and still lengthened out much longer, to atone for their new contracted guilt; they must be supposed to continue impenitent, till that second additional time of torment is ended; at the end of which their guilt will still be risen higher, and vastly increased beyond what it was before. And, at this rate, where can there be any place for an end of their misery?

§ 14. It farther appears from what was observed above, that the sinner continuing obstinate in wickedness under such powerful means to reclaim him, for so long a time, will be so far from being more and more purged, or brought nearer to repentance, that he will be, as it were, infinitely farther from it. Wickedness in his heart will be vastly established and increased. For, it may be laid down as an axiom, that the longer men continue wilfully in wickedness, the more is the habit of sin established, and the more and more will the heart be hardened in it. Again, it may be laid down as another axiom, that the greater and more powerful the means are, that are used to bring men to reform and repent, which they resist, and are obstinate under, the more desperately are men hardened in sin, and the more the principle of it in the heart is confirmed. It may be laid down as a third axiom, that especially does long continuance in perverse and obstinate rebellion against any particular kind of means, tend to render those particular means vain, ineffectual, and hopeless.

After the damned in hell have stood it out with such prodigious and devilish perverseness and stoutness, for ages of ages, in their rebellion and enmity against God, refusing to bow to his will under such constant, severe, mighty chastisements, attended all the while with offers of mercy, what a desperate degree of

hardness of heart and fixed strength of habitual wickedness will they have contracted at last, and how inconceivably farther will they be from a penitent, humble, and pure heart, than when first cast into hell! And if the torments should be lengthened out still longer, and also their impenitence (as by the supposition one will not end before the other does); still the farther will the heart be from being purified. And so, at this rate, the torments will never at all answer their end, and must be lengthened out to all eternity.

§ 15. Matt. v. 25, 26, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt not come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." These words imply, that sinners are in the way with their adversary, having opportunity to be reconciled to him but for a short season, inasmuch as it is intimated, that they must agree with him quickly, or they shall cease to be in the way with him, or to have opportunity to obtain his favor any more. But, if they shall be continued in a state of probation after death to the end of the world, and after that for (as it were) endless ages, how far, how very far, are these words of Christ from representing the matter as it is!

§ 16. That some even in this world are utterly forsaken of God, and given up to their own hearts' lusts, proves that these men never will be purified from their sins. That God should, in the future world, use great means to purify them, and fit them for eternal happiness and glory, in the enjoyment of himself, is not consistent with the supposition, that, after the use of great means and endeavors with them in this world, he gives them up to sin, because of their incorrigibleness and perverse obstinate continuance in rebellion, under the use of those great means, and so leaves them to be desperately hardened in sin, and to go on and increase their guilt, and multiply transgressions to their utter ruin; which is agreeable to manifold representations of Scripture. This is not agreeable to the scheme of such as suppose, that God is all the while, both before and after death, prosecuting the design of purifying and preparing them for bringing them to eternal glory. Consider Prov. xvi. 4, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Psal. xcii. 7, "When the wicked spring as grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed forever." These places show, God has no merciful design with those whom he gives up to sin.

§ 17. The apostle, in Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6, says, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, &c., if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame," &c. The apostle speaks of their renovation to repentance, as (at least) never likely to happen; for this reason, that they have proved irreclaimable under such great means to bring them to repentance, and have thereby so desperately hardened their hearts, and contracted such great guilt by sinning against such great light, and trampling on such great privileges. But if so, how much more unlikely still will it be, that they should ever be renewed to repentance, after they have gone on still more and more to harden their hearts by an obstinate, wilful continuance in sin, many thousand years longer, under much greater means; and have therefore done immensely more to establish the habit of sin, and increase the hardness of their hearts; and after their guilt is so vastly increased, instead of being diminished? If it be impossible to bring them to repentance after they have rebelled against such light and knowledge of

Christ, and the things of another world, as they had in this life; how much more impossible is it, when, added to this, they have had that infinitely greater and clearer knowledge and view of those things to be manifested at the day of judgment; when they shall see Christ in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels; shall see his great majesty, shall see the truth of the things of the word of God, and know the truth of his promises and threatenings, by sight and experience; and shall see all those ineffable manifestations of the glory of Christ, of his power, omniscience, strict inflexible justice, infinite holiness and purity, truth and faithfulness, and infinite mercy to penitents; and the evidences of the dreadful consequences of rebellion and wickedness, and the infinitely happy and glorious consequences of the contrary; withal, even at this time, having the offers of mercy and deliverance from that dreadful misery, and the enjoyment of the favor of their great Judge, and participation of all the happiness and glory of the righteous which they shall see at his right hand, if then they will throw down the weapons of their rebellion, and repent, and comply with his will; and they still, from the greatness of their enmity and perverseness, obstinately and wilfully refuse, yea, and continue still thus refusing, even after they have actually felt the terrible wrath of God, and are cast into the lake of fire; yea, after they have continued there many ages, all the while under offers of mercy on repentance; I say, if it be impossible to renew them to repentance, after their rebelling against, and trampling on the light and knowledge, and means used with them in this world, so that it is not to be expected, because of the degree of hardness and guilt contracted by it; how much less is it to be expected at the day of judgment, after all this obstinacy manifested, and guilt contracted? If guilt be contracted by despising such means and advantages as the apostle has respect to in this life, that it may be compared to guilt that would be contracted by crucifying Christ afresh; how much more, when, added to this, they shall so openly have despised Christ, when appearing to them in all the terrors, and glories, and love, that shall be manifested at the day of judgment, in their immediate and most clear view, and all is offered to them, if they will but yield subjection to him; and their enmity shall have appeared so desperate as rather to choose that dreadful lake of fire, and shall have continued in their choice even after they have felt the severity of that torment without rest day or night for many ages?

§ 18. That all shall not be finally purified and saved, is manifest from Matt. xii. 31, 32: "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—Also, Mark iii. 28, 29: "Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and all blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."—And 1 John v. 16, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say he shall pray for it." From each of these places, it is manifest, that he that is guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall surely be damned, without any deliverance from his punishment, or end to it.

But the various expressions that are used, serve much to certify and fix the import of others. In Matt. xii. 31 it is said, "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." The negative is general, and

equally respects all times. If this sin should be forgiven at a remote time, it would be as contrary to such a negative as this, as if it were forgiven him immediately. But, to determine us that Christ has respect to all times, even the remotest, and that he means to deny that he shall be forgiven at any time whatsoever, in Mark it is said, "he shall never be forgiven," or, "hath never forgiveness;" and, lest this *never* should be interpreted to mean, never as long as he lives, or never in this world, it is said in Matt. xii. 32, "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come." And lest it should be said, that, although he never is forgiven, yet that does not hinder but that there may be an end to his punishment; because he may suffer all he deserves in suffering a temporal punishment, or punishment of a limited, long duration; and he that is acquitted in paying all his debt, is not said to be forgiven his debt: another expression is used in Mark, which shows, that he shall ever suffer damnation, and never have deliverance from his misery, whether by forgiveness or without it—"Hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." And the forementioned expressions, "He shall never be forgiven;" "He hath never forgiveness;" "Shall not be forgiven in this world, nor the world to come," show the meaning of the word *eternal* here, to be such as absolutely excludes any period, any time of favor, wherein wrath, condemnation and punishment, shall have ceased. And what the apostle John says of those who commit the unpardonable sin, confirms the whole, and proves, that he that has committed this sin remains under no dispensation of mercy, and that no favor is ever to be hoped for from God for him; and therefore it is not our duty to pray for favor for such: "There is a sin unto death, I do not say he shall pray for it;" or, I give you no direction to pray for them that sin this sin unto death.

Thus it is evident, that all wicked men will not have an end to their damnation; but when it is said, they are in danger of eternal or everlasting damnation, the word *eternal* is to be understood in the strictest sense. The same terms are used concerning all impenitent sinners, all that die in their sins, that they shall be sentenced to eternal punishment, and shall go into everlasting punishment, &c.—That their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; and they shall be tormented forever and ever; and such terms are used after this world comes to an end; and also when they that have committed the unpardonable sin, and others, shall be sentenced all together to an everlasting fire, in the same terms. It is unreasonable to suppose that the punishment of some will be everlasting, in an infinitely different sense from others jointly sentenced; and that the duration of the punishment of one shall be perfectly as nothing, compared with the duration of the punishment of the other, infinitely less than a second to a million of ages. And it is unreasonable to suppose such a difference, also on this account, that there cannot be such a difference in the demerit of them that commit the unpardonable sin, and the demerit of the sins of all other wicked men, some of whom are exceedingly, and almost inconceivably wicked. There cannot be a truly infinite difference in their guilt, as there must be a properly infinite difference between the dreadfulness of those torments that have an end, however long continued, and however great, and the torments of a truly and strictly everlasting fire.

§ 19. If the damned in hell shall all finally be saved, they shall be saved without Christ. It is in itself unreasonable to suppose, that, since God has done such great things for the salvation of mankind, things that are celebrated in such a manner in Scripture, in both Old Testament and New, expressed everywhere in such exalted terms: things that the prophet, and apostle from

him, says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man from the beginning of the world;" I say, since God has done things so transcendently great for the salvation of sinners, to open a door for their escape from misery; it is unreasonable to imagine, when these joyful tidings are proclaimed to sinners, and this glorious Saviour and great salvation are offered to them, and they fail of being saved by Christ only through their wilful obstinacy and contempt, that, after all, God would put them into such a state that they should have salvation offered to them at any time, whenever they (being left to the freedom of their own wills) see cause to repent and subject themselves to God, without Christ, or any concern in that sacrifice he has offered up for sin. The Scripture teaches us, that there is no remission of sin, without sacrifice to atone for sin; that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. But since God has provided so great a sacrifice for sin as that of his only begotten Son, the Creator and Ruler, and great Judge of the universe; surely it is unreasonable to expect, that any other will be appointed in the room of this for sinners' salvation, because they obstinately reject this. Besides, that there is salvation in no other, and no other name is given under heaven by which men must be saved; and that he is the true light that lighteth every man that ever is enlightened; that life and happiness for men are in him and him only; that he only is the way to the Father, and that his one sacrifice is the only sacrifice for sin; is abundantly declared in the Scriptures. The Levitical priesthood lasted long, but finally gave place to that of Christ; but Christ gives place to no other; is not to be succeeded by another sacrifice, by which the damned that have rejected this, shall at last be saved. For by the oath of God he is a priest forever. He hath an everlasting priesthood. It is plainly implied in Hebrews viii. that God, finding fault with the ancient priesthood and sacrifices, removed them, as not making any thing perfect, not completing the design of God's holiness, wisdom and grace; to make way for the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, which he finds no fault with, and by which perfection is arrived at, and which, therefore, God establishes with a design never to remove it, or introduce any other; but that this should continue forever, as an unchangeable priesthood: and therefore, Christ by the word of the oath is consecrated forevermore. In Heb. x. 26, 27, the apostle says, "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries:" by which two things are manifest; (1,) that without a sacrifice for sin, there is no deliverance from punishment; and, (2,) that there is no other sacrifice for sin, by which sinners can be delivered, but that of Christ.

But now I come to observe, that the damned in hell will never be saved by Christ, or through his sacrifice. This is implied in Heb. ix. 27, 28: "As it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered;" intimating, that if after death there was not to be a final and decisive judgment, but still there was to be a door opened for sinners' salvation by Christ, there might be more reason to suppose it needful that he should be offered again; because Christ tabernacled with men in this world, was united to them, and conformed to them, only to save men in this world, or in this present mortal state. But the apostle's drift plainly supposes, that this will not be; but that final judgment will be passed after death; and no door opened for salvation any more; and so no occasion for any further sacrifice, or this sacrifice being offered again. And further, it is manifest, that Christ's saving work will be at an end at the day of judgment; inasmuch as

Christ has a twofold office, that of the Saviour of the world, and the Judge of the world; so the business of the latter office properly succeeds the former, and it is not fit in the nature of things, that he should come into the world and appear openly in the character and work of universal Judge, to decide men's state, in consequence of the trial there has been for making their state better by salvation, till that trial is over and all its effects completed, when no more is to be hoped as to altering their state for the better by his salvation. Then is the proper season for him to clothe himself with, and to appear in his other character, that of a judge, and to decide and fix men's final and everlasting state. Therefore Christ, at his first coming, appeared to save men from condemnation and a sentence of eternal misery; and not to judge them, as he tells us, John xii. 47: "If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not: for I came, not to judge the world, but to save the world." See also chap. iii. 17, and viii. 15. But the great business he will come upon at his second coming, as is abundantly declared, is to judge the world. And it is also exceedingly plain, that Christ's saving work will be at an end at the day of judgment; because we read that all power was given him in heaven and earth, that he might give eternal life to as many as God had given him. He was exalted at God's own right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour. He had a commission given him of the Father to govern the kingdom and manage the affairs of it by a universal dominion over heaven and earth, that he might order all in subservience to the great design of accomplishing the salvation of men. He was made head over all things to the church. But we read, 2 Cor. xv, that at the end of the world he will deliver up this kingdom; he will resign this commission: which proves, that the work of salvation, which is the design of it, will be at an end, when all his enemies, all that rejected him, and would not have him to rule over them, and so have failed of his salvation, shall be made his footstool, shall be condemned and destroyed. Instead of being the heirs of salvation, he shall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, &c.—When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, 10.

§ 20, If the damned, after they have suffered a while, are to be delivered, and to have eternal life; then the present dispensation of grace and life to the fallen children of men, that was introduced by Christ and his apostles, after the ceasing of the old Mosaic dispensation, is not the last; but another is to be introduced after this ceases, and with regard to those with whom, through the flesh or through their sins and corruption, it has proved unprofitable and ineffectual. A new method must be entered upon of God's gracious dealings with sinners. And as we must suppose that God will proceed with them in this great affair, in a method agreeable to the intelligent, volitive and active nature he has given them, and will deal with them as moral agents, and as creatures whom he has made to love him, to be in subjection to him and to serve him; so we must suppose, that there will be made to them a new revelation of the designs of his wisdom, holiness and grace, with respect to their deliverance and being received to favor and the eternal happy fruits of it; concerning the way in which it is to be done; the qualifications or acts of theirs previously requisite; and that there must be some new treaty set a-foot, either while they are under their punishment, or afterwards, in some intermediate space between that and their being exalted to glory. Doubtless they themselves must have some active concern in the affair, in a way of repenting, seeking, obeying, or yielding subjection to God, and in some acknow

judgment of him, some yielding of themselves to him. For God immediately to advance them from a state of great wickedness and misery in hell, to a state of perfection and confirmed eternal happiness, is neither agreeable to reason and the nature of things, nor to God's known method of dealing with intelligent creatures. It would be much farther from it, than it would have been for God immediately to have instated all angels and men in their confirmed state of life and eternal glory and blessedness, in the instant of their creation, without any terms, any previous concern or act of theirs in order to it.

But, that a new dispensation of grace should thus be introduced, because that which was brought in by Christ and his apostles, proves weak and unprofitable through men's corruption, and there appears to be need of one which shall be more effectual, is not agreeable to the Scripture. For this dispensation is spoken of as the last and most perfect, wherein perfection was reached: Heb. vii. 19, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." And chap. xi. 40, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The ancient dispensation is spoken of as that which God found fault with, it proving ineffectual through the corruption of men; and so he introduced a new administration, that should not be liable to exception, and therefore should not wax old, or be ever liable to vanish away and give place to another; Heb. viii. 6 to the end.

So he speaks of the things of that ancient dispensation, as things which were liable to be shaken and removed; but of the things of the new dispensation that was then introduced, as those that could not be shaken, but should remain forever; Heb. xii. 25 to the end, and 2 Cor. iii. 11. The dispensation of the New Testament is often spoken of in the prophecies of the Old Testament as an everlasting dispensation; Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, chap. xxxii. 40; Isaiah lxi. 8, Ezek. xxxvii. 26.

§ 21. To suppose that, after all the means of grace that are used in this world, Moses and the prophets, Christ and the gospel, the warnings of God's word, and the exhibitions of glorious gospel grace, have been despised and obstinately withstood, so as to make the case desperate as to their success, God has other means in reserve, to be used afterwards to make men holy, that will be more powerful, and shall be effectual; is not agreeable to Scripture. Particularly, that these are the best and last means that God will use with men, seems to be a thing that it was Christ's design to teach us, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 27 to the end: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren, that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." But this is especially manifest, from Rev. xxii. 10 11, 12, "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.—And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be."

I think the meaning must either be this, The time is quickly coming, when every man's state will be fixed, inasmuch as I am quickly coming to judgment to fix every man's state unalterably, according as his work shall be; and after

that there will be no alteration, nor any means or endeavors in order to it; but he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and if this be the meaning, it makes it evident, that Christ will not immediately proceed to the use of the most powerful and effectual means of all, to change the state of the unjust and filthy, to purify them and make them holy, and fit them for eternal glory, with infallible success.—Or, *2dly*, The meaning must be this, which seems to be much the most probable: Christ having given this last revelation to his church to be added to the book of Scripture, with which the canon was to be shut up and sealed, by the instrumentality of the apostle John, who lived the longest of the apostles, and wrote this book after all the rest was dead; orders John, ver. 10, to publish this book, wherein such great future judgments are revealed as coming on the wicked, and such an affecting declaration of the future glory of the saints, to enforce the rest of God's word and means of grace; and then intimates, that no more revelations are to be expected, no more instructions and warnings are to be added to the word of God, as the steady means of grace, any further to confirm and enforce the rest; that the next revelation that is to be expected, and that Christ will make of himself to the world, is to be his immediate appearance to judgment, to fix unalterably every man's state according to his works, according to the improvement he shall have made of those past revelations, instructions and warnings: and therefore, those that will not be purified by those means, are not to expect that better, or other means, will ever be used with them; but he that is unjust must remain so still, and he that is filthy must be filthy still, and he that is righteous shall be righteous still, and he that is holy shall be holy still. Thus Christ takes leave of his church till his last coming, warning them to improve the means of grace they have, and informing them that they are never to have any other: q. d., they have Moses and the prophets; and, in the writings of the New Testament, they have more glorious, powerful, and efficacious revelations of me, who spoke from heaven, and am greater than Moses. Those writings I now finish and seal. Let them hear these, and make a good improvement of them: for these are the last means I shall ever use to change man's state. This is no less inconsistent with his reserving his greatest and most powerful means, with a determined certain success, to be used after the day of judgment.

§ 22. They who suppose the damned are made to suffer the torments of hell for their purification, suppose that God is herein prosecuting his grand design of benevolence to his creatures; yea, benevolence to the sufferers; and that he does not use these severe means but from necessity for their good, because all gentle remedies prove ineffectual. Now, it is unreasonable to suppose, that God is under any necessity of inflicting such extreme torments upon them, and holding them under them for so long a time, in order to their being brought to repentance; and that,

1. If we consider the nature of things: torments inflicted have no tendency to bring a wicked man to repentance directly and properly, if by repentance we mean an alteration of the disposition, and appetites, and taste of the mind. We know, by experience, that pain inflicted for gratifying an appetite, may make men afraid to gratify the appetite; but they do not change the inclination, or destroy the appetite. They may make men willing to comply with those external exercises, &c., of which they have a distaste, and to which their heart, in its relish and inclinations, is averse; yet not from love to the things complied with, but from another cause and for another end, from hatred of pain and love of ease. So that the man complies in some sense, but his

heart does not comply. He is only driven, and as it were forced: and an increase of pain alters not the nature of things. It may make a man more earnestly to desire freedom from pain; but still there is no more to be expected from it than is in the tendency of pain, which is not to give a new nature, a new heart, or a new natural relish and disposition. It is not granted, that even long continued pains and practice will gradually raise an habitual love to virtue. The pains of the damned being great and long continued, may more and more convince them of the folly of their negligence and fearlessness in sin, and may make them willing to take pains externally in religion; but will not show them the beauty of holiness, or the odiousness of sin, so as to cause them to hate sin on its own account. They have no tendency, even gradually, to beget love to God and virtue: but, to make them willing to take pains in religion, and comply with the requisite outward self-denial, it is unreasonable to suppose but that less torment would be sufficient. Can any one that considers human nature, especially of those that deny an innate, desperate wickedness of heart (as the men that we have this controversy with generally do), doubt in the least, whether, if a man should be in a furnace of fire for one day only, alive and full of quick sense, and should retain a full and lively remembrance of his misery, it would not be sufficient to make him wholly comply with all the pains and outward self-denial requisite in order to a universal external obedience to the precepts of the word of God, rather than have those torments renewed and continued for ages; and, indeed, rather than endure one more such day? What pains would not such a man be willing to suffer? What labors could be too much? What would he not be willing to part with in foregoing worldly wealth or pleasures? Would not the most covetous man, that had felt such a rod as this, be willing to part with all his treasures of silver and gold? and the most ambitious man be willing to live in a cottage or wilderness? the most voluptuous man to part with his pleasures? Would he need first to endure many ages of such torment, before he would be willing thus far to comply? It is against all principles of human nature to suppose it. If he retains the remembrance of the torment, in a lively idea of it, it must unspeakably outweigh the most lively and affecting and attractive ideas of the good things of the world. The supposition, therefore, of his not being brought to a compliance with less torment, is as unreasonable as to suppose, that a mote of dust would sink the scale, being put in a balance with a talent of lead, or with ten thousand talents. If the Most High compassionate these poor wretches, and has nothing but a kind and gracious design of infinite mercy and bounty toward them, why does he take such dreadful measures with them? Will no other do? Cannot infinite wisdom find out some gentler method to bring to pass the same design? If it be said that no other can accomplish the effect, consistently with the freedom of will,—I answer, What means can be devised, having a greater tendency to drive men, and compel them to comply with the thing required (if there be any such thing), without acting freely, and as persons left to their own free choice, than such a rod not only held over but used upon them in such an amazing manner, by an omnipotent hand?

2. It is apparent, from what has often come to pass, that God is in no necessity of making use of such dreadful and long continued torments, in order to bring such sinners (equally wicked and obstinate) as die impenitent, to repentance. It is most unreasonable to suppose, that no sinners that ever were converted in this world, were, before their conversion, as wicked and as hard-hearted as some of those that have died impenitent; as Saul the persecutor afterwards the apostle Paul, and some of the converts in the 2d chapter of

Acts, who had a hand in Christ's crucifixion, in whom Christ's prayer was answered, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do:" and innumerable instances of persecutors and others, who have been brought to repentance since those days. Such were converted by gentler means than those pains of hell, in what the Scripture calls everlasting burnings; and that without any infringement of any liberty of the persons necessary to their being moral agents. It would be unreasonable to suppose, that all those eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell were good men: but Christ would not have his hearers imagine they were worse than themselves; and yet intimates, that there was a possibility of their escaping future misery by repentance.

3. So far as pain and affliction are concerned, or made use of to bring men to repentance, it is apparent God can make infinitely less severe chastisement effectual, together with such influences and assistances of his Spirit, as are not inconsistent with the persons' moral agency in their repentance, or in their forsaking sin and turning to God. And, if it should be said, that, it may be, they were none of them so great sinners, and had not the habits of sin so confirmed, as all such as die in sin; I would answer, (1.) That this is very unreasonably supposed: and, (2.) If it should be allowed, yet it cannot be pretended, that the difference of guilt and hard-heartedness is proportionable at all to the severity of the chastisement used for purgation. And, unless this be supposed, the force of the argument is not hurt. If no more than ten degrees of pain, or one year's chastisement be requisite for the overcoming of five degrees of strength of the habit of sin, one would think, that less than 100,000 degrees, or 100,000 years chastisement, should be sufficient to overcome ten degrees of strength of the same habit.

§ 23. If the torments of hell are purifying pains, and are used by a God of universal benevolence towards his creatures, as necessary means for the purgation of the wicked from sin, and their being fitted for, and finally brought to eternal happiness in the enjoyment of the love of God; then it will follow, that the damned in hell are still the objects of God's mercy and kindness, and that in the torments they suffer, they are the subjects of a dispensation of grace and benevolence. All is for their good: all is the best kindness that can be done them, the most benevolent treatment they are capable of, in their state of mind; and, in all, God is but chastising them, as a wise and loving father, with a grieved and compassionate heart, gives necessary chastisement to sons whom he loves, and whose good he seeks to the utmost; in all he does he is only prosecuting a design of infinite kindness and favor. And indeed, some of the chief of those who are in the scheme of hell torments being purifying pains, do expressly maintain, that they, instead of being the fruits of vindictive justice, are really the effects of God's benevolence, not only to the system of intelligent creatures in general, but to the sufferers themselves. Now, how far are these things from being agreeable to the representation which is made of things in the Holy Scriptures? The Scriptures represent the damned as thrown away of God; as things that are good for nothing; and which God makes no account of, Matt. xiii. 48. As dross, and not gold and silver, or any valuable metal: Psal. cxix. 119, "Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth as dross." So Ezek. xxii. 18, Jer. vi. 28—30; as salt that has lost its savor; as good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men; as stubble that is left, and as the chaff thrown out to be scattered by the wind, and go whither that shall happen to carry it, instead of being gathered and laid up as that which is of any value. Psal. i. 4, Job xxi. 18, and xxxv. 5, as that which shall be thrown away as wholly worthless, as chaff and stubble and tares: all

which are thrown away as not worthy of any care to save them; yea, are thrown into the fire, to be burnt up as mere nuisances, as fit for nothing but to be destroyed, and therefore are cast into the fire to be destroyed and done with. Matt. iii 12, and xii. 30, Job xxi. 18, as barren trees, trees that are good for nothing; and not only so, but cumberers of the ground; and, as such, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire. Matt. iii. 10, and vii. 19, Luke xiii. 7, as barren branches in a vine, that are cut off and cast away; as good for nothing, and gathered and burned. John xv. 6, as thrown out and purged away as the filth of the world. Thus, it is said, Job xx. 7, "That the wicked shall perish forever, as his own dung." They are spoken of as those that shall be spued out of God's mouth; as thrown into the lake of fire; as the great sink of all the filth of creation: Rev. xxi. 8, "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their share in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone." As briers and thorns, that are not only wholly worthless in a field, but hurtful and pernicious; and as such as are nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned, Heb. vi. Their end is to be burned; i. e., the husbandman throws them into the fire, and so has done with them forever. He does not still take care of them, in order to make them fruitful and flourishing plants in his garden of delights. The wicked, it is said, shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world, Job xviii. 18. Instead of being treated by God with benevolence, chastening them with the compassion and kindness of a father, for their great and everlasting good, they, at that day, when God shall gather his children together, to make them experience the blessed fruits of the love of a heavenly Father, shall be shut out as dogs, Rev. xxi. 7, 8, with chap. xxii. 14, 15. And are represented as vessels to dishonor, vessels of wrath, fitted for nothing else, and designed for nothing, but to contain wrath and misery. They are spoken of as those that perish and lose their souls, that are lost, 2 Cor. iv. 3. Those that lose themselves and are cast away; those that are destroyed, consumed, &c.—which representations do not agree with such as are under a dispensation of kindness, and the means of a physician, in order to their eternal life, health and happiness, though the means are severe. When God, of old, by his prophets, denounced his terrible judgment against Jerusalem and the people of Israel, against Moab, Tyre, Egypt, Assyria, &c., which judgments, though long continued, were not designed to be perpetual; there were mixed with those awful denunciations, or added to them, promises or intimations of future mercy. But, when the Scripture speaks of God's dealings with ungodly men in another world, there are nothing but declarations and denunciations of wrath and misery, and no intimations of mercy; no gentle terms used, no significations of divine pity, no exhortations to humiliation under God's awful hand, or calls to seek his face and favor, and turn and repent The account that the Scripture gives of the treatment that wicked men shall meet with after this life, is very inconsistent with the notion of their being from necessity subjected to harsh means of cure, and severe chastisement, with a benevolent, gracious design of their everlasting good; particularly the manner in which Christ will treat them at the day of judgment. He will bid the wicked depart from him as cursed.

We have no account of any invitations to accept of mercy; any counsels to repent, that they may speedily be delivered from this misery. But it is represented that then they shall be made his footstool. He shall triumph over them. He will trample upon them as men are wont to tread grapes in a wine-press, when they trample with all their might, to that very end that they may effectually crush them in pieces. He will tread them in his anger, and tram

ple them in his fury, and, as he says, their blood shall be sprinkled on his garments, and he will stain all his raiment, Isaiah lxiii., at the beginning, Rev xiv. 19, 20, and chap. xix. 15, in which last place it is said, he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. These things do not savor of chastening with compassion and benevolence, and as still prosecuting a design of love towards them, that he may in the end actually be their saviour, and the means of their eternal glory. There is nothing in the account of the day of judgment, that looks as though saints had any love or pity for the wicked, on account of the terrible long-continued torments which they must suffer. Nor indeed will the accounts that are given, admit of supposing any such thing. We have an account of their judging them, and being with Christ in condemning them, concurring in the sentence, wherein he bids them begone from him as cursed with devils into eternal fire; but no account of their praying for them, nor of their exhorting them to consider and repent.

They shall not be grieved, but rather rejoice at the glorious manifestations of God's justice, holiness and majesty in their dreadful perdition, and shall triumph with Christ, Rev. xviii. 20, and xix. at the beginning. They shall be made Christ's footstool, and so they shall be the footstool of the saints. They shall dip their feet in their blood, at least the blood of some of them, the blood of their persecutors. Psalm lxviii. 23, "That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same." If the damned were the objects of divine benevolence, and designed by God for the enjoyment of his eternal love, doubtless it would be required of all God's children to love them, and to pity them, and pray for them, and seek their good; as here in this world it is required of them to love their enemies, to be kind to the evil and unjust; and to pity and pray for the wickedest and vilest of men, that were their own persecutors, because they are the subjects of God's mercy in many respects, and are fit objects of infinite divine mercy and love. If Christ, the head of all the church, pities the damned and seeks their good, doubtless his members ought to do so too. If the saints in heaven ought to pity the damned, as well as the saints on earth are obligated to pity the wicked that dwell here; doubtless their pity ought to be in some proportion to the greatness of the calamities of the objects of it, and the greatness of the number of those they see in misery. But if they had pity and sympathizing grief in such measure as this, for so many ages, what an alloy would it be to their happiness! God is represented as whetting his glittering sword, and bending his bow, and making ready his arrows on the string against wicked men, and lifting his hand to heaven, and swearing, that he will render vengeance to his enemies, and reward them that hate him, and make his arrows drunk with their blood, and that his sword shall devour their flesh. Deut. xxxii. 40, 41, 42; and Psalm vii. 11, 12, 13. Certainly this is the language and conduct of an enemy, not of a friend, or of a compassionate chastising father.

The degree of misery and torment that shall be inflicted, is an evidence that God is not a ting the part of benevolence and compassion, and only chastening from a kind and gracious principle and design. It is evident, that it is God's manner, when he thus afflicts men for their good, and chastens them with compassion, to stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind; to correct in measure; to consider the frame of those that are corrected; to remember their weakness, and to consider how little they can bear. He turns away his anger and does not stir up all his wrath, Psalm lxxviii. 37, 38, 39, Isai. xxvii. 8, Jer xxx. 11, and xlvi. 28. And it is his manner, in the midst even of the severest afflictions, to order some mitigating circumstances, and to mix some

mercy. But the misery of the damned is represented as unmixed. The wine of the wrath of God is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, that they may be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, Rev. xiv. 10, 11. They are tormented in a flame that burns within them, as well as round about them, and they shall be denied so much as a drop of water to cool their tongues. And God's wrath shall be inflicted in such a manner, as to show his wrath, and make his strength known on the vessels of wrath, fitted for no other use but to be destroyed, and which shall be punished with everlasting destruction, answerable to that glory of Christ's power which he shall appear in at the day of judgment, when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with power and great glory, in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. Can any imagine, that in all this God is only correcting from love, and that the subjects of these inflictions are some of those happy ones whom God corrects in order to teach them out of his law? whom he makes sore, and bindeth up? Job v. 17, 18, Psalm xciv. 12. There is nothing in Scripture that looks as if the damned were under the use of means to bring them to repentance. It is apparent that God's manner is, when he afflicts men to bring to repentance by affliction, to join instructions, admonitions and arguments to persuade. But if we judge by Scripture representations of the state of the damned, they are left destitute of all these things. There are no prophets, or ministers, or good men, to admonish them, to reason and expostulate with them, or to set them good examples. There is a perfect separation made betwixt all the righteous and the wicked by a great gulf; so that there can be no passing from one to the other. They are left wholly to the company of devils, and others like them. When the rich man in hell cries to his father Abraham, begging a drop of water, he denies his request; and adds no exhortation to repentance. Wisdom is abundantly represented in the book of Proverbs, as counselling, warning, calling, inviting, and expostulating with such as are under means for the obtaining wisdom, and as waiting upon them in the use of means, that they may turn at her reproof. But as to such as are obstinate under these means of grace and calls of wisdom, till the time of their punishment comes, it is represented, that their fear shall come as desolation, and destruction as a whirlwind; that distress and anguish shall come upon them; and that then it will be in vain for them to seek wisdom: that if they seek her early they shall not find her, and if they call upon her, she will not hear; but instead of this, will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh: which certainly does not consist with the idea that wisdom, or the God of wisdom, is still striving with them, and using means, in a benevolent and compassionate manner, to bring them to seek and embrace wisdom; still offering wisdom with all her unspeakable benefits, if they will hearken to her voice and comply with her counsels; and not only so, but is actually using the most powerful and effectual means to bring them to this happiness, even such as shall surely be successful, though they have obstinately refused all others, and when wisdom called, they heretofore refused, and when she stretched forth her hand, they did not regard; and so is still most effectually acting the part of a friend, to deliver them from their distress and anguish, instead of laughing at their calamity, Prov. i. latter end. This declaration of wisdom, if it ever be fulfilled at all, will surely be fulfilled most completely and perfectly at the time appointed for obstinate sinners to receive their most perfect and complete punishment of all mankind, even such as live and die in their wickedness, are and ever will be

the objects of Christ's good will and mercy, and those whose eternal happiness he desires and seeks; then surely he would pray for all: but Christ declares that there are some that he prays not for. John xvii. 9, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Compared with ver. 14, "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;" ver. 25, "The world hath not known thee, but I have known thee; and these have known that thou hast sent me;" and ver. 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." By this it appears that Christ prayed for all that should ever be true believers. But he prayed not for those who should not be brought by the word of the apostles, and such means of grace as are used in this world, to believe in him, and should continue notwithstanding not to know God, and in enmity against true holiness or Christianity. These were such as Christ prayed not for.

§ 24. If sin and misery, and the second death, are to continue and prevail for so long a time after the day of judgment, with respect to great multitudes that Christ will finally save and deliver from those things, having perfectly conquered and abolished them; then how can the Scriptures truly represent, that all enemies shall be put under his feet at the end of the world, and that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death;* and that then, having perfectly subdued all his enemies, he shall resign up the kingdom to the Father, and he himself be subject to the Father? as in 1 Cor. xv. 20—28. The time of Christ's victory over death will be at the general resurrection and day of judgment, as is evident by verse 54, with the foregoing context. The chief enemies that Christ came to destroy, with regard to such as should be saved, and be of his church, were *sin* and *misery*, or death consisting in sin, and death consisting in suffering the second death, unspeakably the greatest enemy that came by sin, infinitely more terrible than temporal death. But if the notion I am opposing be true, these greatest and worst enemies, instead of being subdued, shall have their principal reign afterwards, for many ages at least; viz., sin, in the sad effect and consequence of it, men's misery; and God shall have his strongest conflict with those enemies afterward; that is, shall strive against them in the use of the most powerful means.

§ 25. There is great evidence that the devil is not the subject of any dispensation of divine mercy and kindness, and that God is prosecuting no design of infinite goodness towards him, and that his pains are not purifying pains. It is manifest, that, instead of any influence of his torments to bring him nearer to repentance, he has been from the beginning of his damnation, constantly, with all his might, exerting himself in prosecuting his wickedness, his violent, most haughty, and malignant opposition to God and man; fighting especially with peculiar virulence against Christ and his church; opposing with all his might every thing that is good; seeking the destruction and misery of all mankind, with boundless and insatiable cruelty; on which account he is called Satan, the adversary, and Abaddon and Apollyon, the destroyer. He is represented as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, a viper, the old serpent, the great red dragon, red on account of his bloody cruel nature. He is said to be a murderer from the beginning. He has murdered all mankind, has murdered their souls as well as their bodies. He was the murderer of Jesus Christ, by instigating Judas and his crucifiers. He has most cruelly shed the blood of an innumerable multitude of the children of God. He is emphatically called the evil one, that wicked one, &c. He is a liar and the father of lies and the father of all the sin and wickedness that is, or ever has been, in the world

He is the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. It is said, that he that committeth sin is of the devil. For the devil sinneth from the beginning; and all wicked men are spoken of as his children. He has set up himself as God of this world in opposition to the true God, and has erected a vast kingdom over the nations; and is constantly carrying on a war with the utmost earnestness, subtlety, malice, and venom, against Jesus Christ, and all his holy and gracious designs, maintaining a kingdom of darkness, wickedness and misery, in opposition to Christ's kingdom of light, holiness and peace; and thus will continue to do till the end of the world, as appears by Scripture prophecies.

And God's dealings with him are infinitely far from being those of a friend, kindly seeking his infinite good, and designing nothing else in the end but to make him eternally happy in love and favor, and blessed union with him. God is represented everywhere as acting the part of an enemy to him, that seeks and designs nothing in the final event but his destruction. The grand work of God's providence, which God is prosecuting from the beginning to the end of the world, viz., the work of redemption, is against him, to bruise or break in pieces his head, to cast him like lightning from heaven, from that height of power and dominion to which he has exalted himself, to tread him under foot, and to cause his people to trample and bruise, or crush him under foot, and gloriously to triumph over him. Christ, when he conquered him, made a show of him openly, triumphing over him. Now, concerning this, two things may be observed: 1. That, seeing the devils are not to have an end put to their misery, and their pains are not purifying pains in order to their being brought to eternal happiness at last, it appears that it is not God's design finally to make all his creatures happy, and that the torments of hell are not purifying pains inflicted with a merciful design with respect to all damned spirits. And, 2. It is evident, that as it will be with the devil in this respect, so it will be with the wicked. This is reasonable to suppose from what the Scripture represents of the relation wicked men stand in to the devil as his children, servants, subjects, instruments, and his property and possession. They are all ranked together with him in one kingdom, in one interest, and one company. And many of them are the great ministers of his kingdom that he has set up, and to whom he has committed authority; such as the beast and false prophet that we read of in the Revelation. Now, how reasonable and natural is it to suppose, that those who are thus united should have their portion and lot together? As Christ's disciples, subjects, followers, soldiers, children, instruments and faithful ministers, shall have their part with him in his eternal glory; so we may reasonably believe that the devil's disciples, followers, subjects, soldiers in his army, his children, instruments and ministers of his kingdom, should have their part with him, and be dealt with as he is dealt with; and not that such an infinite difference should be made between them, that the punishment of the one should be eternal, and that of the other but temporal, and therefore infinitely less, infinitely disproportionate; so that the proportion between the punishment of the latter and that of the former, is as nothing, infinitely less than a unit to a million of millions. This is unreasonable to be supposed in itself, as the difference of guilt and wickedness cannot be so great, but must be infinitely far from it; especially considering the aggravations of the wickedness of a great part of damned men, as committed against Christ, and gospel grace and love; which exceeding great aggravation the sin of the devils never had.

As the devil's ministers, servants and instruments, of the angelic nature,

those that are called the devil's angels, shall have their part with him; for the like reason we may well suppose, his servants and instruments of the human nature, will share with him. And not only is this reasonable in itself, but the Scripture plainly teaches us that it shall be so. In Rev. xix. 20, it is said, "The beast and the false prophet were both cast alike into the lake of fire burning with brimstone." So it is said, chap. xx. 16, "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever," —thus expressing both the kind of misery and the duration. Just in the same manner it is said concerning the followers of the beast. It is said, chap. xiv. 9, 10, 11, "Saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast, &c.—the same shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night." And chap. xxi. 8, of wicked men in general, it is said, they shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. So we find in Christ's description of the day of judgment, the wicked are sentenced to everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. By which it appears most plainly, that they share with the devils in suffering misery of the same kind, and also share with him in suffering misery of the same everlasting continuance. And, indeed, not only would the punishment infinitely differ as to quantity and duration, if the punishment of the devils was to be eternal, and of wicked men only temporal; but if this were known, it would, as it were, infinitely differ in kind. The one suffering God's hatred and mere vengeance, inflictions that have no pity or kindness in them; the other, the fruit of his mercy and love, and infinitely kind intention: the one attended with absolute despair, and a black and dismal sinking prospect of misery, absolutely endless; the other with the light of hope, and a supporting prospect, not only of an end to their misery, but of an eternal unspeakable happiness to follow.

§ 26. This notion we are opposing, is repugnant to the representations which the Scripture makes, as though at the day of judgment would happen the consummation of all things, the finishing of God's design, and end of the revolutions and changes of a state of trial, preparation and proficience, and the bringing all the mutations of the world to their fixed period, and the settling of all things in their final state. Thus, the apostle says, 1 Cor. xv. 24, "Then cometh the end." And the things there spoken of, that shall then be done, show, that then will be the finishing of things, and settling them in their final state; such as, the end of Christ's kingdom given him for the subduing of all enemies, and his resigning his commission for the conquering of all enemies, and subduing all evil, and the restitution of all things as (having completed his design), that God henceforth may be all in all, according to the most natural state of things. And therefore, when the general resurrection and day of judgment had been represented to the apostle John, God then proclaims, Rev. xxi. 6, "And he said unto me, It is done; I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."—By which it is very manifest, that God will have so far finished his design, as to have brought the whole course of things, in all their mutations, to their proper and intended period, final issue, and fixed state. Whereby it shall appear at last, that as God was the beginning, the first cause of all things, from whom the whole system and series of things originated at their beginning; so when they are brought to their final issue, he will appear to be also their last end: so that, as things took their first rise from him, so they shall have their last end in him. He shall appear to be the last end of all things, when their last end is reached, in the issue of all their changes, revolutions,

and labors. Agreeable to this, the day of judgment is from time to time called the last day, John vi. 40, 44, 54; and the great day, Jude 6.—By these things it is most manifest, that, at that day, the moral world shall be settled in its final state, and that the judgment of that day will be the last judgment.

But if the multitude of the damned are yet to be kept in a state of preparation, and under the use of means for producing repentance, and so vast a change as that from infernal misery to heavenly and eternal glory; how far are things from being all brought to their consummation, last issue, and settled in their final state? And, if so, then the judgment of that day cannot be the last judgment. For the design of the last judgment, whenever that happens, must be to settle things in the moral world, or among such creatures as are the proper subjects of moral government, and of a judicial proceeding, in their last state. But the last judgment for this end, cannot be till the day of preparation and proficience, and use of means in order to repentance; the day of God's striving and opportunity, for the obtaining the favor and rewards of the great Judge, is over. According to the notion which I am opposing, the judgment that shall take place at the end of the world, will be so far from being the last judgment, or any proper judgment to settle all things in their final state, that it will, with respect to the wicked, be no more than the judgment of a physician, whether more sharp and powerful remedies must not be applied in order to the relief of sinners, and the cure of their disease, which, if not cured, will make them eternally miserable.

§ 27. It is evident that the future misery of the wicked in hell is not to come to an end, and to be succeeded by eternal happiness; and that their misery is not subservient to their happiness, because the Scripture plainly signifies, concerning those that die in their sins, that they have all the good and comfort in this life, that ever is designed for them. Luke vi. 24, "Wo unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation."—Luke xvi. 25, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things."—Psal. xvii. 13, 14, "Deliver my soul from the wicked—from the men of the world which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure."

§ 28. According to the opinion I am now opposing God will surely at the last deliver all the damned from their misery, and make them happy. So that God will see to it, that the purifying torments shall certainly at last have their effect, to turn them from sin. Now, how can this consist with God's treating them as moral agents, and their acting from the freedom of their own wills, in the affair of their turning from sin, and becoming morally pure and virtuous, according to the notions of freedom and moral agency which now prevail, and are strenuously maintained by some of the chief asserters of this opinion concerning hell torments; which notion of freedom implies contingence, and is wholly inconsistent with the necessity of the event?

If after all the torments of the damned used to bring sinners to repentance, the consequence aimed at, viz., their turning from sin to virtue, be not necessary, but it shall still remain a contingent event, whether there ever will be any such consequence of those severe, long continued chastisements or no; then, how can it be determined, that this will surely be the consequence? How can it be a thing infallible, that such a consequence of means used will follow, when, at the same time, it is not a consequence any way necessarily connected with the means used, it being only a thing contingent whether it will follow or not? If God has determined absolutely to make them all pure and happy, and yet their purity and happiness depends on the freedom of their will; then here is an absolute divine decree, consistent with the freedom of men's will, which is a doctrine utterly rejected by the generality of that sort of men who deny the eter-

nity of hell torments. If it be said, that God has not absolutely determined the duration or measure of their torments, but intends to continue them till they do repent, or to try lesser torments first, and, if these do not answer, to increase them till they are effectual, determining that he will raise or continue them till the effect shall finally and infallibly follow; that is the same thing as to necessitate the effect. And here is necessity in such a case, as much as when a founder puts a piece of metal in a furnace, with a resolution to melt it, and if continuing it there a little while will not dissolve it, that he will keep it there till it does dissolve : and if, by reason of its peculiar hardness, an ordinary degree of heat of the furnace will not be effectual, that he will increase the vehemence of the heat, till the effect shall certainly follow.

N. B. Some of these things observed in opposition to the notion of hell torments being only purifying pains, may be used as arguments to prove the eternity of future misery in general. As what is said concerning the consummation of all things, &c.,—concerning the rich man's having received his good things, &c.—the punishment of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost—concerning the last dispensation, Rev. xxii. 10, 11, 12,—sinners being thrown away, lost, &c.—the last enemy subdued—concerning the devil, and wicked men's suffering the same punishment with him.

29. If any should maintain this scheme of temporary future punishments, viz., that the torments in hell are not purifying pains, and that the damned are not in a state of trial with regard to any expected admission to eternal happiness, and that therefore they are not the proper objects of divine benevolence; that the dispensation they are under, is not truly a dispensation of mercy, but that their torments are properly penal pains, wherein God displays his vindictive justice; that they shall suffer misery to such a degree, and for so long a time as their obstinate wickedness in this world deserves; and that indeed they shall be miserable a very long time, so long, that it is often figuratively spoken of in Scripture as being everlasting, and that then they shall be annihilated: on this I would observe, that there is nothing got by such a scheme; no relief from the arguments taken from Scripture, for the proper eternity of future punishment. For, if it be owned, that Scripture expressions denote a punishment that is properly eternal, but it be said that it is in no other sense properly so, than as the annihilation, or state of non-existence that the wicked shall return to, will be eternal; and that this eternal annihilation is that death which is so often threatened for sin, that *perishing forever*, that *everlasting destruction*, being lost, perishing, utterly consumed, &c., so often denounced to wicked men; and that the fire of hell be called eternal fire, in the same sense that the external fire which consumed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah is called eternal fire, Jude 7, because it utterly consumed those cities, that they might never be built more; and that this fire is called that which cannot be quenched, or at least not until it has destroyed them that are cast into it.—If this be all that these expressions denote, then they do not at all signify the length of the torments, or long continuance of their misery; so that the supposition of the length of their torments is brought in without any necessity, the Scripture saying nothing of it, having no respect to it, when it speaks of their everlasting punishments: and it answers the Scripture expressions as well, to suppose that they shall be annihilated immediately, without any long pains, provided the annihilation be everlasting

30. If any should suppose that the torments of the damned in hell are properly penal, and in execution of penal justice, but yet that they are neither eterna., nor shall end in annihilation, but shall be continued till justice is satisfied, and they have truly suffered as much as they deserve, whereby their punishment

shall be so long as to be called everlasting, but that then they shall be delivered and finally be the subjects of everlasting happiness; and that therefore they shall not in the mean time be in a state of trial, nor will be waited upon in order to repentance, nor will their torments be used as means to bring them to it; for that the term and measure of their punishment shall be fixed, from which they shall not be delivered on repentance, or any terms or conditions whatsoever, until justice is satisfied: one thing that I would observe, in answer to this, is, that if it be so, the damned, while under their suffering, are either answerable for the wickedness that is acted by them while in that state, or may properly be the subjects of a judicial proceeding for it, or not. If the former be supposed, viz., that they are answerable and accountable for all that wickedness that is acted by them during their long state of suffering for the sins of this life, and must also be punished for all that wickedness as much as it deserves, and so as fully to satisfy justice (as is supposed with respect to the sins of this life); then it will follow, that they must have another state of suffering and punishment, after the ages of their suffering for the sins of this life are ended. And it cannot be supposed, that this second period of suffering will be shorter than the first: for the first is only for the sins committed during a short life, often represented in Scripture, for its shortness, to be a dream, a tale that is told, a blast of wind, a vapor, a span, a moment, a flower, &c. But the time of punishment is always represented as exceeding long, called everlasting; represented as enduring forever and ever, as having no end, &c. If the sins of a moment must be followed with such as it were endless ages of punishment, then, doubtless, the sins of those endless ages, must be followed with another second period of suffering, much longer. For it must be supposed, that the damned continue sinning all the time of their punishment; for none can rationally imagine, that God would hold them under such extreme torments, and terrible manifestations and executions of his wrath, after they have thoroughly repented, and turned from sin, and are become pure and holy, and conformed to God, and so have left off sinning. And if they continue in sin during this state of punishment, with assurance that God still has a great benevolence for them, even so as to intend finally to make them everlastingly happy in the enjoyment of his love, then their sin must be attended with great aggravation; as they will have the evil and ill desert of sin set before them in the most affecting manner, in their dreadful sufferings for it, attended besides with evidence that God is infinitely benevolent towards them, and intends to bestow infinite blessings upon them. But, if it be so, that this first long period of punishment must be followed with a second as long, or longer; for the same reason, the second must be followed by a third, as long, or longer than that; and so the third must be followed by a fourth, and so *in infinitum;* and, at this rate, there never can be an end of their misery.—So this scheme overthrows itself.

And if the second thing mentioned be affirmed, viz., that the damned are not answerable for the wickedness they commit during their state of punishment, then we must suppose that, during the whole of their long, and, as it were, eternal state of punishment, they are given up of God to the most unrestrained wickedness, having this to consider, that how far soever they go in the allowed exercises and manifestations of their malice and rage against God and Christ, saints and angels, and their fellow damned spirits, they have nothing to fear from it—it will be never the worse; and surely, continuing in such unrestrained wickedness, for such an exceeding, and, as it were, endless length of duration, must most desperately confirm the habit of sin, must increase the root and fountain of it in the heart as it were infinitely. Now, how unreason-

able is it to suppose, that God would thus deal with such as were objects of his infinite kindness, and the appointed subjects of the unspeakable and endless fruits of his love, in a state of perfect holiness and purity, and conformity to and union with himself; thus to give them up beforehand to a kind of eternity of unrestrained malignity against himself, and every kind of hellish wickedness, as it were infinitely to increase the fountain of sin in the heart, and the strength of the principle and habit? If they are thus given up to unrestrained wickedness during the period of their punishment, and there be evidence of this, then this certain continuance in unbounded wickedness for so long a time, must be part of the punishment they are sentenced to, and that is bound upon them by an irreversible doom; which certainly supposes such a necessity that they are laid under, as is not consistent with that freedom which this sort of people hold as requisite to moral agency. Now, how incongruous is it to suppose, with regard to those that God has great benevolence to, and designs eternal favor for, that he would lay them under a necessity of extreme unbounded hatred of him, blasphemy and rage against him, for so many ages; such necessity as should exclude all liberty of their own in the case? If God intends not only punishment, but purification by these torments; on this supposition, instead of their being purified, they must be set at an infinitely greater distance from purification. And if God intends them for a second time of probation, in order to their being brought to repentance and the love of God after their punishment is finished; then how can it be certain beforehand that they shall finally be happy, as is supposed? How can it be certain they will not fail in their second trial, or in their third, if there be a third? Yea, how much more likely that they will fail of truly turning in heart from sin to the love of God, in their second trial, if there be any proper trial in the case, after their hearts have been so much more brought under the power of a strong habit of sin and enmity to God? If the habit proved so strong in this life that the most powerful means and mighty inducements of the gospel would not prevail, so that God was, as it were, under a necessity of cutting down and dealing thus severely with them; how much less likely will it be, that they will be prevailed upon to love God and the ways of virtue, after their hearts are set at so much greater distance from those things? Yea, unless we suppose a divine interposition of almighty, efficacious power, to change the heart in the time of this second trial, we may be sure that, under these circumstances, the heart will not turn to love God. But such an interposition of efficacious power is not agreeable to the notions of freedom and moral agency, which that sort of people maintain, who deny the eternity of the torments of hell. It would be yet more plainly contrary to their notions of freedom and moral agency, to suppose, that after their state of suffering is over, they would be immediately made perfectly holy, and freed from such a degree of confirmed wickedness, without any time of trial at all. Such perfect holiness, wrought so immediately from the greatest depth of wickedness, and the most extremely confirmed malignity and depravity of heart, could not be the effect of free will, in their notion of it; and therefore would, according to their system, be no virtue, no rewardable or praiseworthy holiness. Besides the supposition of God's thus setting his creatures at once in a state of confirmed and eternal holiness and happiness, is not agreeable to God's way of dealing with his creatures: for, how much better and more fitly might the creature be thus confirmed, in the first instant of its creation, than to be thus confirmed in perfection of favor and glory, after so many ages of actual enmity and most extreme wickedness, without any previous trial or space of repentance!

And besides, if it be so, that they are laid under such a necessity of hating and blaspheming God, for so many ages, in the manner that has been spoken of, a necessity utterly inconsistent with human liberty; then they will have no reason whatever to condemn themselves for all this enmity and blasphemy of theirs, for so long a time, after they are made perfectly holy and happy, and see that they had no reason at all for such malice and rage; but that all was infinitely against reason, and that at the same time there was infinite reason that they should love and honor God. But how extremely incongruous is such an imagination, that God would lay those he intended for the eternal bounty and blessedness of dear children, under such circumstances, that they must necessarily hate him, and with devilish fury curse and blaspheme him for innumerable ages in the most unreasonable manner, and yet never have cause, even when they are delivered and made happy in God's love, to condemn themselves for it, though they see the infinite hatefulness and unreasonableness of it, because God laid them under such necessity of it, that they could use no liberty of their own in the case? I leave it for all to judge, whether God's thus ordering things, with regard to such as he, from great benevolence, intended for eternal happiness in a most blessed union with himself, be credible.

§ 31. That which lasts as long as the world stands, is sometimes said to be forever. Yet the space of man's life in comparison of the state that succeeds is often represented as a moment, the shortest space, yea, even as nothing. And so the space of time to the end of the world is represented as very short, Heb. x. 37. Here in a particular manner observe those words of Christ, Rev. xxii. 10, 11, 12. After Christ had shown John the end of the world, the day of judgment, and consummation of all things, he says, "*The time is at hand.* He that is unjust let him be unjust still, &c.—Behold I come *quickly*, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Here Christ represents to his beloved disciple the space from that time to the end of the world, to be very short, after he had from time to time represented to him (in the course of those visions, of which this is the conclusion) the state of the punishment of the wicked to be everlasting, and forever and ever; as chap. xiv. 10, 11, and xix. 3, and xx. 10. And even in this 22d chapter, 5th verse, when Christ says,—Behold I come quickly, and so represents the time to the end of the world to be but short, we are naturally and justly led to compare this representation with that which is made of the duration of the future state both of good and bad after the judgment; and to draw inferences accordingly concerning the duration of that following state, on many accounts: As, 1. The same Jesus, in the same course or series of visions, by which John is directed in this book, makes both representations: and the future state of the righteous and wicked, especially of the latter, is set forth in a representation that is insisted on, and repeated from time to time, as being forever and ever. 2. He at this very time, and in the same vision (as may be seen verse 5 of this same 22d chapter), says of the blessedness of the righteous, that it shall be forever and ever; the very same phrase that is used before, from time to time, to set forth the duration of the misery of the wicked. 3. After he had spoken of the glory of the righteous as being forever and ever, he, in the midst of those words, wherein he represents the time to the end of the world as very short, joins both righteous and wicked together, representing their state as fixed, unalterable and everlasting, in the same expressions; "*The time is at hand.* He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Behold I come quickly." The shortness of the time to the end

of the world, is expressed in the words immediately preceding those that express the endlessness of the state of both righteous and wicked; and then again the words immediately following express the same thing over again, "Behold I come quickly." And, 4. The words immediately following these, naturally lead us to the same comparison, even to compare the duration of the time before the coming of the Judge, and the duration of those rewards and punishments which he will render to men according as their works shall be; "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be." The shortness of the time before his coming to judge and recompense men, is declared, for the comfort of the righteous, and terror of the wicked; and the thing that justly renders the consideration of the measure of duration before Christ's coming comfortable to the saints, though it seems so long on some accounts, is, that it is very short in comparison of the duration of the reward that shall follow; and so the thing that should justly make the measure of time, before the judgment, terrible to the wicked, is, that though they may be ready to please themselves that the time is so long, yet it is very short in comparison of the punishment that shall follow. And in other places of Scripture, the time preceding the punishment of the wicked in particular, is represented as very short. Thus it is threatened that God would bring upon them swift destruction: and it is said, the things that shall come upon them, make haste, and that vengeance shall come speedily on the enemies of the elect, and the like. And the punishment of the wicked itself is always represented as everlasting and endless. Whence we may most reasonably suppose, that those phrases, when applied to future punishment, are used in their most proper sense, and not at all in the same manner as when applied to the space preceding, which is here spoken of as comparatively very short.

When the fire of hell is represented as that which shall never be quenched, it is not thereby meant that it shall not be quenched till it has consumed its fuel and goes out itself. For, by being quenched, as the word is used in Scripture, is meant, not only a being extinguished or put out, but a going out, or ceasing, or ending in any respect. So the words are to be understood, Isai. xliii. 17, "They are extinct, they are quenched as tow," i. e., their power and rage shall be like the fire of tow, that lasts but for a very little while, and then goes out Vessels of mercy, and vessels of wrath, are expressly distinguished. And the apostle James speaks of some that shall have judgment without mercy, James ii. 13; which proves the punishment of hell is not the effect of mercy, and that mercy and pity never shall be exercised towards the damned.

§ 32. Hutcheson on the Passions, p. 77, 3d edition, says, "No misery is farther the occasion of joy to a sedate temper, than as it is necessary to some prepollent happiness in the whole." It would be worth while particularly to examine this matter, and inquire, whether there be not something in the natural sense of desert, which God has implanted in creatures that are moral agents which tends to acquiescence in the pains or suffering of the ill-deserving, not merely from a natural desire of good to ourselves or others, or good to the universal system, but as what a sense of desert naturally tends to, as a gratification of that sense.

§ 33. It is manifest, that God's design in punishing his enemies, is in part to convince them of his greatness and majesty, and to make them know their folly in despising them, as well as to make his glory and majesty visible to others, even to the whole universe. Exod. ix. 14—17, "For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.

For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Psal. l. 21, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." Therefore the punishment of the wicked is not annihilation.

§ 34. The same disposition and habit of mind, and manner of viewing things, that is indeed the main ground of the cavils of many of the modern freethinkers, and modish writers, against the extremity and eternity of hell torments, if given way to, and relied upon, would cause them to be dissatisfied with almost any thing that is very uncomfortable in a future punishment, so much as the enduring of the pain that is occasioned by the thrusting of a thorn under the nail of the finger, for a whole year together, 365 days, day and night, without any rest, or the least intermission or abatement. In short, it will be found, that there will be no satisfying the infidel humor, with any thing that is very contrary to men's inclinations: any thing that they are very averse to bear, they would be averse to believe. There are innumerable calamities that come to pass in this world, through the permission and ordination of divine providence, against which (were it not that they are what we see with our eyes, and are universally known and incontestable facts) this cavilling unbelieving spirit would strongly object; and, if they were only proposed in the theory as matters of faith, would be opposed as exceedingly inconsistent with the moral perfections of God; and the opinions of such as asserted them would be cried out against, as in numberless ways contrary to God's wisdom, his justice, goodness, mercy, &c.,—such as, the innumerable calamities that have happened to poor innocent children, through the merciless cruelty of barbarous enemies; their being gradually roasted to death at the fire by Indians, shrieking and crying for their fathers and mothers; the extreme pains they sometimes are tormented to death with, by some terrible diseases which they suffer; the calamities that have many times been brought on whole cities, while besieged, and when taken by merciless soldiers, destroying all, men, women and children, without any pity; the extreme miseries which have been suffered by millions of innocent persons, of all ages, sexes and conditions, in times of persecution, when there has been no refuge to be found on earth; yea, those things that come to pass universally, which all mankind are the subjects of, in temporal death, which is so dreadful to nature, and which the human nature which God has made is so extremely reluctant to. There is no trust at all to such notions and views, such *seemings* as are the main ground of these men's objections against the torments of hell, as recorded in the Scripture. The main thing is, that it is terrible, and so seems shocking to the inward apprehension of their minds; and this they call a being shocking to common sense, when it is indeed no otherwise so, than as it is very opposite to common inclinations.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. DAVID BRAINERD,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL; MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS FROM THE HONORABLE SOCIETY, IN SCOTLAND, FOR THE PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE; AND PASTOR OF A CHURCH OF CHRISTIAN INDIANS IN NEW-JERSEY;

WHO DIED AT NORTHAMPTON, IN NEW-ENGLAND, OCTOBER 9TH, 1847, IN THE 30TH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

CHIEFLY TAKEN FROM HIS OWN DIARY, AND OTHER PRIVATE WRITINGS, WRITTEN FOR HIS OWN USE.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE WORCESTER EDITION

THE particular account, given in this book, of Mr. BRAINERD, save tha part whic relates to his last exercises and his death, we have been constrained to omit. This omission is not only a matter of necessity, as we had not room for the entire account, but we think of propriety, as it consists almost wholly of extracts from Mr. BRAINERD's Diary, and in his own words. A few brief remarks are inde-d interspersed by Mr. EDWARDS, to connect the extracts, and give the whole the cast of a continued Narrative. But the account taken at large is too much of a mere compilation to be numbered properly among his works. It will not be possible we confess to feel the pertinency and weight of the Reflections which Mr. EDWARDS has made on these memoirs, so sensibly as if they had been just read, as in fact they are supposed to have been. But if the reader will consider what we have inserted, as a specimen of Mr. BRAINERD's views, exercises and efforts, as a Christian, a Preacher and a Missionary, as detailed through more than two hundred preceding pages, he will not be badly prepared to peruse the Reflections.

CLOSING SCENE OF THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. DAVID BRAINERD.

Mr. Brainerd, before he left Boston, had occasion to bear a very full, plain and open testimony against that opinion, that the essence of saving faith lies in believing that Christ died for me in particular, and that this is the first act of faith in a true believer's closing with Christ.- -He did it in a long conference he had with a gentleman, that has very publicly and strenuously appeared to defend that tenet. He had this discourse with him in the presence of a number of considerable persons, who came to visit Mr. Brainerd before he left the town, and to take their leave of him. In which debate he made this plain declaration, at the same time confirming what he said by many arguments, that the essence of saving faith was wholly left out of that definition of saving faith which that gentleman has published; and that the faith which he had defined, had nothing of God in it, nothing above nature, nor indeed above the power of the devils; and that all such as had this faith, and had no better, though they might have this to never so high a degree, would surely perish.—And he declared also, that he never had greater assurance of the falseness of the principles of those that maintained such a faith, and of their dangerous and destructive tendency, or a more affecting sense of the great delusion and misery of those that depended on getting to heaven by such a faith, while they had no better, than he lately had when he was supposed to be at the point to die, and expected every minute to pass into eternity. Mr. Brainerd's discourse at this time, and the forcible reasonings by which he confirmed what he asserted, appeared to be greatly to the satisfaction of those present; as several of them took occasion expressly to manifest to him, before they took leave of him.

When this conversation was ended, having bid an affectionate farewell to his friends, he set out in the cool of the afternoon, on his journey to Northampton, attended by his brother, and my daughter that went with him to Boston: and would have been accompanied out of the town by a number of gentlemen, besides that honorable person who gave him his company for some miles on that occasion, as a testimony of their esteem and respect, had not his aversion to any thing of pomp and show prevented it.

Saturday, July 25.—I arrived here at Northampton; having set out from Boston on Monday, about four o'clock, P. M. In this journey, I rode about sixteen miles a day one day with another. I was sometimes extremely tired and faint on the road, so that it seemed impossible for me to proceed any further: at other times I was considerably better, and felt some freedom both of body and mind.

Lord's day, July 26.—This day I saw clearly, that I should never be happy; yea, that God himself could not make me happy, unless I could be in a

capacity to please and glorify him forever: take away this, and admit me into all the fine heavens that can be conceived of by men or angels, and I should still be miserable forever.

Though he had so far revived, as to be able to travel thus far, yet he manifested no expectation of recovery: he supposed, as his physician did, that his being brought so near to death at Boston, was owing to the breaking of ulcers in his lungs: he told me, that he had several such ill turns before, only not to so high a degree, but as he supposed owing to the same cause, viz., the breaking of ulcers; and that he was brought lower and lower every time; and it appeared to him, that in his last sickness, in Boston, he was brought as low as it was possible and yet live; and that he had not the least expectation of surviving the next return of this breaking of ulcers: but still appeared perfectly calm in the prospect of death.

On Wednesday morning, the week after he came to Northampton, he took leave of his brother Israel, as never expecting to see him again in this world; he now setting out from hence on his journey to New Haven.

When Mr. Brainerd came hither, he had so much strength as to be able, from day to day, to ride out two or three miles, and to return; and sometimes to pray in the family; but from this time he gradually, but sensibly, decayed, and became weaker and weaker.

While he was here, his conversation from first to last was much on the same subjects as it had been in when in Boston: he was much in speaking of the nature of true religion of heart and practice, as distinguished from its various counterfeits; expressing his great concern, that the latter did so much prevail in many places. He often manifested his great abhorrence of all such doctrines and principles in religion, as in any wise savored of, and had any, though but a remote tendency to Antinomianism; of all such notions, as seemed to diminish the necessity of holiness of life, or to abate men's regard to the commands of God, and a strict, diligent, and universal practice of virtue and piety, under a pretence of depreciating our works, and magnifying God's free grace. He spake often, with much detestation, of such experiences and pretended discoveries and joys, as have nothing of the nature of sanctification in them, and do not tend to strictness, tenderness, and diligence in religion, and meekness and benevolence towards mankind, and a humble behavior: and he also declared, that he looked on such pretended humility as worthy of no regard, that was not manifested by modesty of conduct and conversation. He spake often, with abhorrence, of the spirit and practice that appears among the greater part of separatists at this day in the land, particularly those in the eastern parts of Connecticut; in their condemning and separating from the standing ministry and churches, their crying down learning, and a learned ministry, their notion of an immediate call to the work of the ministry, and the forwardness of laymen to set up themselves as public teachers. He had been much conversant in the eastern part of Connecticut, his native place being near to it, when the same principles, notions and spirit, began to operate, which have since prevailed to a greater height; and had acquaintance with some of those persons who are become heads and leaders of the separatists; he had also been conversant with persons of the same way elsewhere: and I heard him say, once and again, he knew by his acquaintance with this sort of people, that what was chiefly and most generally in repute among them as the power of godliness, was an entirely different thing from that true vital piety recommended in the Scriptures, and had nothing in it of that nature. He manifested a great dislike of a disposition in persons to much noise and show in religion, and affect-

ing to be abundant in proclaiming and publishing their own experiences: though at the same time he did not condemn, but approved of Christians speaking of their own experiences on some occasions, and to some persons, with due modesty and discretion.

After he came hither, as long as he lived, he was much in speaking of that future prosperity of Zion, that is so often foretold and promised in the Scripture: it was a theme he delighted to dwell upon; and his mind seemed to be carried forth with earnest concern about it, and intense desires, that religion might speedily and abundantly revive and flourish; though he had not the least expectation of recovery; yea, the nearer death advanced, and the more the symptoms of its approach increased, still the more did his mind seem to be taken up with this subject. He told me, when near his end, that "he never in all his life, had his mind so led forth in desires and earnest prayers for the flourishing of Christ's kingdom on earth, as since he was brought so exceeding low at Boston." He seemed much to wonder, that there appeared no more of a disposition in ministers and people to pray for the flourishing of religion through the world; that so little a part of their prayers was generally taken up about it in their families, and elsewhere; and particularly, he several times expressed his wonder, that there appeared no more forwardness to comply with the proposal lately made, in a memorial from a number of ministers in Scotland, and sent over into America, for united, extraordinary prayer, among Christ's ministers and people, for the coming of Christ's kingdom: and he sent it as his dying advice to his own congregation that they should practise agreeably to that proposal.*

Though he was constantly exceeding weak, yet there appeared in him a continual care well to improve time, and fill it up with something that might be profitable, and in some respect for the glory of God or the good of men; either profitable conversation, or writing letters to absent friends, or noting something in his Diary, or looking over his former writings, correcting them, and preparing them to be left in the hands of others at his death, or giving some directions concerning a future conducting and management of his people, or employment in secret devotions. He seemed never to be easy, however ill, if he was not doing something for God, or in his service.

After he came hither, he wrote a preface to a Diary of the famous Mr Shepard's, having been much urged to it by those gentlemen in Boston, who had the care of the publication: which Diary, with his preface, has since been published.

In his Diary for Lord's day, August 9, he speaks of longing desires after death, through a sense of the excellency of a state of perfection.

In his Diary for Lord's day, August 16, he speaks of his having so much refreshment of soul in the house of God, that it seemed to refresh his body. And this is not only noted in his Diary, but was very observable to others; it was very apparent, not only, that his mind was exhilarated with inward consolation, but also that his animal spirits and bodily strength seemed to be remarkably restored, as though he had forgot his illness. But this was the last time that ever he attended public worship on the Sabbath.

On Tuesday morning that week, I being absent on a journey, he prayed

* His congregation, since this, have with great cheerfulness and unanimity fallen in with this advice, and have practised agreeably to the proposal from Scotland; and have at times, appeared with uncommon engagedness and fervency of spirit in their meetings and united devotions, pursuant to that proposal: also the Presbyteries of New York, and New Brunswick, since this, have with one consent, fallen in with the proposal as likewise some others of God's people in those parts.

with my family; but not without much difficulty, for want of bodily strength: and this was the last family prayer that ever he made.

He had been wont, until now, frequently to ride out, two or three miles: but this week, on Thursday, was the last time he ever did so.

Lord's day August, 23.—This morning I was considerably refreshed with the thought, yea, the hope and expectation of the enlargement of Christ's kingdom; and I could not but hope, the time was at hand, when Babylon the great would fall, and rise no more: this led me to some spiritual meditations, that were very refreshing to me. I was unable to attend public worship either part of the day; but God was pleased to afford me fixedness and satisfaction in divine thoughts. , Nothing so refreshes my soul, as when I can go to God, yea, to God *my exceeding joy*. When he is so, sensibly, to my soul, O, how unspeakably delightful is this!

In the week past I had divers turns of inward refreshing; though my body was inexpressibly weak, followed continually with agues and fevers. Sometimes my soul centered in God, as my only portion; and I felt that I should be forever unhappy, if he did not reign: I saw the sweetness and happiness of being his subject, at his disposal: this made all my difficulties quickly vanish.

From this Lord's day, viz., August 23, I was troubled very much with vapory disorders, and could neither write nor read, and could scarcely live, although, through mercy, was not so much oppressed with heavy melancholy and gloominess, as at many other times.

Until this week he had been wont to lodge in a room above stairs; but he now grew so weak, that he was no longer able to go up stairs and down; Friday August 28, was the last time he ever went above stairs; henceforward he betook himself to a lower room.

On Wednesday, September 2, being the day of our public lecture, he seemed to be refreshed by seeing the neighboring ministers that came hither to the lecture, and expressed a great desire once more to go to the house of God on that day: and accordingly rode to the meeting, and attended divine service while the Rev. Mr. Woodbridge of Hatfield preached. He signified that he supposed it to be the last time that ever he should attend the public worship; as it proved. And indeed it was the last time that ever he went out at our gate alive.

On the Saturday evening next following, he was unexpectedly visited by his brother, Mr. John Brainerd, who came to see him from New Jersey. He was much refreshed by this unexpected visit, this brother being peculiarly dear to him; and he seemed to rejoice in a devout and solemn manner, to see him, and to hear the comfortable tidings he brought concerning the state of his dear congregation of Christian Indians: and a circumstance of this visit, that he was exceeding glad of, was, that his brother brought him some of his private writings from New Jersey, and particularly his Diary that he had kept for many years past.

Lord's day, September 6.—I began to read some of my private writings, which my brother brought me; and was considerably refreshed, with what I met with in them.

Monday, September 7.—I proceeded farther in reading my private writings and found they had the same effect upon me as before: I could not but rejoice and bless God for what had passed long ago, which without writing had been entirely lost.

This evening, when I was in great distress of body, my soul longed that God should be glorified: I saw there was no heaven but this. I could not but speak to the bystanders then of the only happiness, viz., pleasing God. O that

I could forever live to God! The day I trust, is at hand, the perfect day: O the day of deliverance from all sin!

Lord's day, September 13.—I was much refreshed and engaged in meditation and writing, and found a heart to act for God. My spirits were refreshed and my soul delighted to do something for God.

On the evening following that Lord's day, his feet began to appear sensibly swelled; which thenceforward swelled more and more; a symptom of his dissolution coming on.

The next day, his brother John left him, being obliged to return to New Jersey on some business of great importance and necessity; intending to return again with all possible speed, hoping to see his brother yet once more in the land of the living.

On the Thursday of this week, September 17, was the last time that ever he went out of his lodging room. That day, he was again visited by his brother Israel, who continued with him thenceforward until his death. On that evening, he was taken with something of a diarrhœa; which he looked upon as another sign of his approaching death: whereupon he expressed himself thus; O, the glorious time is now coming! I have longed to serve God perfectly: now God will gratify those desires! And from time to time, at the several steps and new symptoms of the sensible approach of his dissolution, he was so far from being sunk or damped, that he seemed to be animated, and made more cheerful; as being glad at the appearances of death's approach. He often used the epithet, glorious, when speaking of the day of his death, calling it that glorious day. And as he saw his dissolution gradually approaching, he was much in talking about it, with perfect calmness speaking of a future state; and also settling all his affairs, very particularly and minutely, giving directions concerning what he would have done in one respect and another after he was dead. And the nearer death approached, the more desirous he seemed to be of it. He several times spake of the different kinds of willingness to die; and spoke of it as an ignoble, mean kind of willingness to die, to be willing to leave the body, only to get rid of pain; or to go to heaven only to get honor and advancement there.

Saturday, September 19.—Near night, while I attempted to walk a little, my thoughts turned thus: How infinitely sweet it is, to love God, and be all for him! Upon which it was suggested to me, You are not an angel, not lively and active. To which my whole soul immediately replied, I as sincerely desire to love and glorify God, as any angel in heaven. Upon which it was suggested again, But you are filthy, not fit for heaven. Hereupon instantly appeared the blessed robes of Christ's righteousness, which I could not but exult and triumph in: and I viewed the infinite excellency of God, and my soul even broke with longings, that God should be glorified. I thought of dignity in heaven; bu instantly the thought returned, I do not go to heaven to get honor, but to give all possible glory and praise. O, how I longed that God should be glorified on earth also! O, I was made for eternity, if God might be glorified! Bodily pains I cared not for: though I was then in extremity, I never felt easier; I felt willing to glorify God in that state of bodily distress, as long as he pleased I should continue in it. The grave appeared really sweet, and I longed to lodge my weary bones in it: but O that God might be glorified! This was the burden of all my cry. O, I knew I should be active as an angel, in heaven; and that I should be stripped of my filthy garments! So that there was no objection. But O, to love and praise God more, to please him forever! This my soul panted after, and even now pants for while I write. O that God might

be glorified in the whole earth. Lord, let *thy kingdom come.* I longed for a spirit of preaching to descend and rest on ministers, that they might address the consciences of men with closeness and power. I saw God had the residue of the Spirit; and my soul longed it should be poured from on high. I could not but plead with God for my dear congregation, that he would preserve it and not suffer his great name to lose its glory in that work: my soul still longing, that God might be glorified.

The extraordinary frame that he was in, that evening, could not be hid; *his mouth spake out of the abundance of his heart,* expressing in a very affecting manner much the same things as are written in his Diary: and among very many other extraordinary expressions, which he then uttered, were such as these: My heaven is to please God, and to glorify him, and give all to him, and to be wholly devoted to his glory; that is the heaven I long for; that is my religion, and that is my happiness; and always was, ever since I suppose I had any true religion; and all those that are of that religion, shall meet me in heaven. I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honor to God. It is no matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or a low seat there; but to love and please and glorify God is all: had I a thousand souls, if they were worth any thing, I would give them all to God; but I have nothing to give, when all is done. It is impossible for any rational creature to be happy without acting all for God: God himself could not make him happy any other way. I long to be in heaven, praising and glorifying God with the holy angels: all my desire is to glorify God. My heart goes out to the burying place; it seems to me a desirable place: but O! to glorify God; that is it; that is above all. It is a great comfort to me, to think that I have done a little for God in the world: O! it is but a very small matter; yet I have done a little; and I lament it, that I have not done more for him. There is nothing in the world worth living for, but doing good, and finishing God's work, doing the work that Christ did. I see nothing else in the world, that can yield any satisfaction, besides living to God, pleasing him, and doing his whole will. My greatest joy and comfort has been, to do something for promoting the interest of religion, and the souls of particular persons: and now in my illness, while I am full of pain and distress from day to day, all the comfort I have, is in being able to do some little char, or small piece of work for God, either by something that I say, or by writing, or some other way.

He intermingled with these and other like expressions, many pathetical counsels to those that were about him; particularly to my children and servants. He applied himself to some of my younger children at this time; calling them to him, and speaking to them one by one; setting before them, in a very plain manner, the nature and essence of true piety, and its great importance and necessity; earnestly warning them not to rest in any thing short of that true and thorough change of heart, and a life devoted to God; counselling them not to be slack in the great business of religion, nor in the least to delay it; enforcing his counsels with this, that his words were the words of a dying man. Said he, I shall die here, and here I shall be buried, and here you will see my grave, and do you remember what I have said to you. I am going into eternity: and it is sweet to me to think of eternity; the endlessness of it makes it sweet: but O, what shall I say to the eternity of the wicked! I cannot mention it, nor think of it: the thought is too dreadful. When you see my grave, then remember what I said to you while I was alive; then think with yourself, how that man that lies in that grave, counselled and warned me to prepare for death

His body seemed to be marvellously strengthened, through the inward vigor and refreshment of his mind; so that, although before he was so weak that he could hardly utter a sentence, yet now he continued his most affecting and profitable discourse to us for more than an hour, with scarce any intermission; and said of it, when he had done, it was the last sermon that ever he should preach.

This extraordinary frame of mind continued the next day; of which he says in his Diary as follows.

Lord's day, September 20.—Was still in a sweet and comfortable frame; and was again melted with desires that God might be glorified, and with longings to love and live to him. Longed for the influences of the Divine Spirit to descend on ministers, in a special manner And O, I longed to be with God, to behold his glory, and to bow in his presence.

It appears by what is noted in his Diary, both of this day, and the evening preceding, that his mind at this time was much impressed with a sense of the importance of the work of the ministry, and the need of the grace of God, and his special spiritual assistance in this work: and it also appeared in what he expressed in conversation; particularly in his discourse to his brother Israel, who was then a member of Yale College at New Haven, and had been prosecuting his studies and academical exercises there, to that end, that he might be fitted for the work of the ministry, and was now with him.* He now, and from time to time, in this his dying state, recommended to his brother, a life of self-denial, of weanedness from the world, and devotedness to God, and an earnest endeavor to obtain much of the grace of God's Spirit, and God's gracious influences on his heart; representing the great need which ministers stand in of them, and the unspeakable benefit of them from his own experience. Among many other expressions, he said thus: "When ministers feel these special gracious influences on their hearts, it wonderfully assists them to come at the consciences of men, and as it were to handle them with hands; whereas, without them, whatever reason and oratory we make use of, we do but make use of stumps instead of hands."

Monday, September 21.—I began to correct a little volume of my private writings: God, I believe, remarkably helped me in it; my strength was surprisingly lengthened out, and my thoughts quick and lively, and my soul refreshed, hoping it might be a work for God. O, how good, how sweet it is, to labor for God.

Tuesday, September 22.—Was again employed in reading and correcting, and had the same success, as the day before. I was exceeding weak; but it seemed to refresh my soul, thus to spend time.

Wednesday, September 23.—I finished my corrections of the little piece forementioned, and felt uncommonly peaceful: it seemed as if I had now done all my work in this world, and stood ready for my call to a better. As long as I see any thing to be done for God, life is worth having: but O, how vain and unworthy it is, to live for any lower end! This day I indited a letter, I think, of great importance, to the Rev. Mr. Byram in New Jersey: O that God would bless and succeed that letter, which was written for the benefit of his church!† O that God would *purify the sons of Levi*, that his glory may be advanced!

* This young gentleman was an ingenious, serious, studious, and hopefully truly pious person: there appeared in him many qualities giving hope of his being a great blessing in his day. But it has pleased God, since the death of his brother, to take him away also. He died that winter, at New Haven, on Jan. 6, 1747-8, of a nervous fever, after about a fortnight's illness.

† It was concerning the qualifications of ministers, and the examination and licensing of candidates for the work of the ministry.

This night, I endured a dreadful turn, wherein my life was expected scarce an hour or minute together. But blessed be God, I have enjoyed considerable sweetness in divine things, this week, both by night and day.

Thursday, September 24.—My strength began to fail exceedingly; which looked further as if I had done all my work: however, I had strength to fold and superscribe my letter. About two I went to bed, being weak and much disordered, and lay in a burning fever until night, without any proper rest. In the evening I got up, having lain down in some of my clothes; but was in the greatest distress that ever I endured, having an uncommon kind of hiccough; which either strangled me, or threw me into a straining to vomit; and at the same time was distressed with griping pains. O, the distress of this evening! I had little expectation of my living the night through, nor indeed had any about me: and I longed for the finishing moment! I was obliged to repair to bed by six o'clock, and through mercy enjoyed some rest; but was grievously distressed at turns with the hiccough. My soul breathed after God, while the watcher was with me: When shall I come to God, even to God, my exceeding joy? O for this blessed likeness!

Friday, September 25.—This day, I was unspeakably weak, and little better than speechless all the day: however, I was able to write a little, and felt comfortably in some part of the day. O, it refreshed my soul, to think of former things, of desires to glorify God, of the pleasures of living to him! O my dear God, I am speedily coming to thee, I hope! Hasten the day, O Lord, if it be thy blessed will: *O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Amen.*

Saturday, September 26.—I felt the sweetness of divine things, this forenoon; and had the consolation of a consciousness that I was doing something for God.

Lord's day, September 27.—This was a very comfortable day to my soul; I think, I awoke with God. I was enabled to lift up my soul to God, early this morning; and while I had little bodily strength, I found freedom to lift up my heart to God for myself and others. Afterwards, was pleased with the thoughts of speedily entering into the unseen world.

Early this morning, as one of the family came into the room, he expressed himself thus: I have had more pleasure this morning, than all the drunkards in the world enjoy, if it were all extracted! So much did he esteem the joy of faith above the pleasures of sin.

He felt that morning an unusual appetite to food, with which his mind seemed to be exhilarated, as looking on it a sign of the very near approach of death; and said upon it, I was born on a Sabbath day; and I have reason to think I was new-born on a Sabbath day; and I hope I shall die on this Sabbath day: I should look upon it as a favor, if it may be the will of God that it should be so: I long for the time. O, *why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?* I am very willing to part with all: I am willing to part with my dear brother John, and never to see him again, to go to be forever with the Lord.† O, when I go there, how will God's dear church on earth be upon my mind!

Afterwards, the same morning, being asked how he did, he answered, I am

* This was the last that ever he wrote in his Diary with his own hand: though it is continued a little farther, in a broken manner, written by his brother Israel, but indited by his mouth in this his weak and dying state.

† He had before this expressed a desire, if it might be the will of God, to live until his brother returned from New-Jersey; Who when he went away, intended, if possible, to perform his journey and return in a fortnight; hoping once more to meet his brother in the land of the living. The fortnight was now near expired, it ended the next day.

almost in eternity; I long to be there. My work is done; I have done with all my friends; all the world is nothing to me; I long to be in heaven, praising and glorifying God with the holy angels: all my desire is to glorify God.

During the whole of these last two weeks of his life he seemed to continue in this frame of heart, loose from all the world, as having done his work, and done with all things here below, having nothing to do but to die, and abiding in an earnest desire and expectation of the happy moment, when his soul should take its flight, and go to a state of perfection of holiness and perfect glorifying and enjoying God, manifested in a variety of expressions. He said, that the consideration of the day of death, and the day of judgment, had a long time been peculiarly sweet to him. He from time to time spake of his being willing to leave the body and the world immediately, that day, that night, and that moment, if it was the will of God. He also was much in expressing his longings that the church of Christ on earth might flourish, and Christ's kingdom here might be advanced, notwithstanding he was about to leave the earth, and should not with his eyes behold the desirable event, nor be instrumental in promoting it. He said to me, one morning as I came into the room, My thoughts have been employed on the old dear theme, the prosperity of God's church on earth. As I waked out of sleep, I was led to cry for the pouring out of God's Spirit, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom, which the dear Redeemer did and suffered so much for. It is this that especially makes me long for it. He expressed much hope that a glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom was near at hand.

He once told me, that he had formerly longed for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the glorious times of the church, and hoped they were coming; and should have been willing to have lived to promote religion at that time, if that had been the will of God; but, says he, I am willing it should be as it is; I would not have the choice to make for myself for ten thousand worlds. He expressed, on his death bed, a full persuasion, that he should in heaven see the prosperity of the church on earth, and should rejoice with Christ therein; and the consideration of it seemed to be highly pleasing and satisfying to his mind.

He also still dwelt much on the great importance of the work of ministers of the gospel; and expressed his longings, that they might be filled with the Spirit of God; and manifested much desire to see some of the neighboring ministers, whom he had some acquaintance with, and whose sincere friendship he was confident of, that he might converse freely with them, on that subject, before he died. And it so happened, that he had opportunity with some of them according to his desire.

Another thing that lay much on his heart, and that he spake of, from time to time, in these near approaches of death, was the spiritual prosperity of his own congregation of Christian Indians in New Jersey: and when he spake of them it was with peculiar tenderness; so that his speech would be presently interrupted and drowned with tears.

He also expressed much satisfaction in the disposals of Providence, with regard to the circumstances of his death; particularly that God had before his death given him the opportunity he had had in Boston, with so many considerable persons, ministers and others, to give in his testimony for God, and against false religion, and many mistakes that lead to it and promote it; and there to lay before pious and charitable gentlemen, the state of the Indians and their necessities, to so good effect; and that God had since given him opportunity to write to them further concerning these affairs; and to write other letters of importance, that he hoped might be of good influence with regard to the state of religion

among the Indians, and elsewhere, after his death. He expressed great thankfulness to God for his mercy in these things. He also mentioned it as what he accounted a merciful circumstance of his death, that he should die here. And speaking of these things, he said, God had granted him all his desire; and signified, that now he could with the greater alacrity leave the world.

Monday, September 28.—I was able to read, and make some few corrections in my private writings; but found I could not write, as I had done; I found myself sensibly declined in all respects. It has been only from a little while before noon, until about one or two o'clock, that I have been able to do any thing for some time past: yet this refreshed my heart, that I could do any thing, either public or private, that I hoped was for God.

[This evening he was supposed to be dying: he thought so himself, and was thought so by those who were about him. He seemed glad at the appearance of the near approach of death. He was almost speechless, but his lips appeared to move; and one that sat very near him, heard him utter such expressions as these, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. O, why is his chariot so long in coming!* After he revived, he blamed himself for having been too eager to be gone. And in expressing what he found in the frame of his mind at that time, he said, he then found an inexpressibly sweet love to those that he looked upon as belonging to Christ, beyond almost all that ever he felt before; so that it seemed, to use his own words, like a little piece of heaven to have one of them near him. And being asked whether he heard the prayer that was, at his desire, made with him; he said, yes, he heard every word, and had an uncommon sense of the things that were uttered in that prayer, and that every word reached his heart.

On the evening of the next day, viz., Tuesday, September 29, as he lay in his bed, he seemed to be in an extraordinary frame; his mind greatly engaged in sweet meditations concerning the prosperity of Zion: there being present here at that time two young gentlemen of his acquaintance, that were candidates for the ministry, he desired us all to unite in singing a psalm on that subject, even Zion's prosperity.—And on his desire we sung a part of the 102d Psalm. This seemed much to refresh and revive him, and gave him new strength; so that, though before he could scarcely speak at all, now he proceeded, with some freedom of speech, to give his dying counsels to those two young gentlemen before mentioned, relating to their preparation for, and prosecution of that great work of the ministry they were designed for; and in particular, earnestly recommending to them frequent secret fasting and prayer: and enforced his counsel with regard to this, from his own experience of the great comfort and benefit of it; which, said he, I should not mention, were it not that I am a dying person. And after he had finished his counsel, he made a prayer, in the audience of us all; wherein, besides praying for this family, for his brethren, and those candidates for the ministry, and for his own congregation, he earnestly prayed for the reviving and flourishing of religion in the world.

Until now he had every day sat up part of the day; but after this he never rose from his bed.]

Wednesday, September 30.—I was obliged to keep my bed the whole day, through weakness. However redeemed a little time, and with the help of my brother, read and corrected about a dozen pages in my MS. giving an account of my conversion.

Thursday, October 1.—I endeavored again to do something by way of writing, but soon found my powers of body and mind utterly fail. Felt not so sweetly as when I was able to do something that I hoped would do some good

In the evening, was discomposed and wholly delirious; but it was not long before God was pleased to give me some sleep, and fully composed my mind.* O, blessed be God for his great goodness to me, since I was so low at Mr. Broomfield's, on Thursday, June 18, last past. He has, except those few minutes, given me the clear exercise of my reason, and enabled me to labor much for him, in things both of a public and private nature; and, perhaps, to do more good than I should have done if I had been well; besides the comfortable influences of his blessed Spirit, with which he has been pleased to refresh my soul. May his name have all the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Friday, October 2.—My soul was this day, at turns, sweetly set on God: I longed to be with him, that I might behold his glory. I felt sweetly disposed to commit all to him, even my dearest friends, my dearest flock, and my absent brother, and all my concerns for time and eternity. O that his kingdom might come in the world; that they might all love and glorify him, for what he is in himself; and that the blessed Redeemer might *see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. O come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*† Amen.

[The next evening, we very much expected his brother John from New Jersey; it being about a week after the time that he proposed for his return when he went away. And though our expectations were still disappointed, yet Mr. Brainerd seemed to continue unmoved, in the same calm and peaceful frame, that he had before manifested; as having resigned all to God, and having done with his friends, and with all things below.

On the morning of the next day, being Lord's day, October 4, as my daughter Jerusha, who chiefly tended him, came into the room, he looked on her very pleasantly, and said, Dear Jerusha, are you willing to part with me? I am quite willing to part with you: I am willing to part with all my friends; I am willing to part with my dear brother John, although I love him the best of any creature living: I have committed him and all my friends to God, and can leave them with God. Though if I thought I should not see you, and be happy with you in another world, I could not bear to part with you. But we shall spend a happy eternity together!

In the evening, as one came into the room with a Bible in her hand, he expressed himself thus: O, that dear book! That lovely book! I shall soon see it opened! The mysteries that are in it, and the mysteries of God's providence, will be all unfolded!

His distemper now very apparently preyed on his vitals in an extraordinary manner: not by a sudden breaking of ulcers in his lungs, as at Boston, but by a constant discharge of purulent matter, in great quantities: so that what he brought up by expectoration, seemed to be as it were mouthfuls of almost clear pus; which was attended with very great inward pain and distress.

On Tuesday, October 6, he lay for a considerable time, as if he were dying At which time, he was heard to utter, in broken whispers, such expressions as these: He will come, he will not tarry. I shall soon be in glory. I shall soon glorify God with the angels. But after some time he revived.

The next day, viz. Wednesday, October 7, his brother John arrived, being returned from New Jersey; where he had been detained much longer than he intended, by a mortal sickness prevailing among the Christian Indians, and by some other things in their circumstances that made his stay with them neces-

* From this time forward, he had the free use of his reason until the day before his death; excepting that at some times he appeared a little lost for a moment, at first waking out of sleep.

† Here ends his Diary: these are the last words that are written in it, either by his own hand, or by any other from his mouth.

sary. Mr. Brainerd was affected and refreshed with seeing him, and appeared fully satisfied with the reasons of his delay; seeing the interest of religion and of the souls of his people required it.

The next day, Thursday, October 8, he was in great distress and agonies of body; and for the bigger part of the day, was much disordered as to the exercise of his reason. In the evening he was more composed, and had the use of his reason well; but the pain of his body continued and increased. He told me it was impossible for any to conceive of the distress he felt in his breast. He manifested much concern lest he should dishonor God, by impatience under his extreme agony; which was such, that he said, the thought of enduring it one minute longer was almost insupportable. He desired that others would be much in lifting up their hearts continually to God for him, that God would support him, and give him patience. He signified that he expected to die that night; but seemed to fear a longer delay: and the disposition of his mind with regard to death appeared still the same that it had been all along. And notwithstanding his bodily agonies, yet the interest of Zion lay still with great weight on his mind; as appeared by some considerable discourse he had that evening with the Rev. Mr. Billing, one of the neighboring ministers, who was then present, concerning the great importance of the work of the ministry, &c. And afterwards, when it was very late in the night, he had much very proper and profitable discourse with his brother John, concerning his congregation in New Jersey, and the interest of religion among the Indians. In the latter part of the night, his bodily distress seemed to rise to a greater height than ever; and he said to those then about him, that it was another thing to die, than people imagined; explaining himself to mean that they were not aware what bodily pain and anguish is undergone before death. Towards day, his eyes fixed: and he continued lying immovable, until about six o'clock in the morning, and then expired, on Friday, October 9, 1747, when his soul, as we may well conclude, was received by his dear Lord and Master, as an eminently faithful servant, into that state of perfection of holiness, and fruition of God, which he had so often and so ardently longed for; and was welcomed by the glorious assembly of the upper world, as one peculiarly fitted to join them in their blessed employments and enjoyments.

Much respect was shown to his memory at his funeral; which was on the Monday following, after a sermon preached the same day, on that solemn occasion. His funeral was attended by eight of the neighboring ministers, and seventeen other gentlemen of liberal education, and a great concourse of people.]

REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING MEMOIRS OF MR. BRAINERD.

1 We have here an opportunity, as I apprehend, in a very lively instance, to see the nature of true religion; and the manner of its operation, when exemplified in a high degree and powerful exercise. Particularly it may be worthy to be observed,

1. How greatly Mr. Brainerd's religion differed from that of some pretenders to the experience of a clear work of saving conversion wrought on their hearts: who, depending and living on that, settle in a cold, careless and carnal frame of mind, and in a neglect of thorough, earnest religion, in the stated

practice of it. Although his convictions and conversion were in all respects exceeding clear and very remarkable; yet how far was he from acting as though he thought he had got through his work, when once he had obtained comfort, and satisfaction of his interest in Christ, and title to heaven! On the contrary, that work on his heart, by which he was brought to this, was with him evidently but the beginning of his work, his first entering on the great business of religion and the service of God, his first setting out in his race. His work was not finished, nor his race ended, until life was ended; agreeable to frequent Scripture representations of the Christian life. He continued pressing forward in a constant manner, forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth towards the things that were before. His pains and earnestness in the business of religion were rather increased than diminished, after he had received comfort and satisfaction concerning the safety of his state. Those divine principles, which after this he was actuated by, of love to God, and longings and thirstings after holiness, seemed to be more effectual to engage him to pains and activity in religion, than fear of hell had been before.

And as his conversion was not the end of his work, or of the course of his diligence and strivings in religion; so neither was it the end of the work of the Spirit of God on his heart: but on the contrary, the beginning of that work; the beginning of his spiritual discoveries, and holy views; the first dawning of the light, which thenceforward increased more and more; the beginning of his holy affections, his sorrow for sin, his love to God, his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, his longings after holiness. And the powerful operations of the Spirit of God in these things, were carried on, from the day of his conversion, in a continued course, to his dying day. His religious experiences, his admiration, his joy and praise, and flowing affections, did not only hold up to a considerable height for a few days, weeks or months, at first, while hope and comfort were new things with him; and then gradually dwindle and die away, until they came to almost nothing, and so leave him without any sensible or remarkable experience of spiritual discoveries, or holy and divine affections, for months together; as it is with many, who, after the newness of things is over, soon come to that pass, that it is again with them very much as it used to be before their supposed conversion, with respect to any present views of God's glory, of Christ's excellency, or of the beauty of divine things; and with respect to any present thirstings for God, or ardent outgoings of their souls after divine objects: but only now and then, they have a comfortable reflection on things they have met with in times past, and are something affected with them; and so rest easy, thinking all things are well; they have had a good clear work, and their state is safe, and they doubt not but they shall go to heaven when they die. How far otherwise was it with Mr. Brainerd, than it is with such persons! His experiences, instead of dying away, were evidently of an increasing nature. His first love and other holy affections, even at the beginning, were very great; but after months and years, became much greater and more remarkable; and the spiritual exercises of his mind continued exceeding great, though not equally so at all times, yet usually so, without indulged remissness, and without habitual dwindling and dying away, even until his decease. They began in a time of general deadness all over the land, and were greatly increased in a time of general reviving of religion. And when religion decayed again, and a general deadness returned, his experiences were still kept up in their height, and his holy exercises maintained in their life and vigor; and so continued to be in a general course, wherever he was, and whatever his circumstances were, among English and Indians, in company and alone, in towns and cities, and in the howling wilderness in

sickness and in health, living and dying. This is agreeable to Scripture descriptions of true and right religion, and of the Christian life. The change that was wrought in him at his conversion, was agreeable to Scripture representations of that change which is wrought in true conversion; a great change, and an abiding change, rendering him a new man, a new creature: not only a change as to hope and comfort, and an apprehension of his own good estate; and a transient change, consisting in high flights of passing affections; but a change of nature, a change of the abiding habit and temper of his mind. Nor a partial change, merely in point of opinion, or outward reformation; much less a change from one error to another, or from one sin to another; but a universal change, both internal and external; as from corrupt and dangerous principles in religion, unto the belief of the truth, so from both the habits and ways of sin, unto universal holiness of heart and practice; from the power and service of Satan, unto God.

2. His religion did apparently and greatly differ from that of many high pretenders to religion, who are frequently actuated by vehement emotions of mind, and are carried on in a course of sudden and strong impressions, and supposed high illuminations and immediate discoveries, and at the same time are persons of a virulent zeal, *not according to knowledge.*

His convictions, preceding his conversion, did not arise from any frightful impressions on his imagination, or any external images and ideas of fire and brimstone, a sword of vengeance drawn, a dark pit open, devils in terrible shapes, &c., strongly fixed in his mind. His sight of his own sinfulness did not consist in any imagination of a heap of loathsome material filthiness within him; nor did his sense of the hardness of his heart consist in any bodily feeling in his breast, something hard and heavy like a stone, nor in any imagination whatever of such a nature.

His first discovery of God or Christ, at his conversion, was not any strong idea of any external glory or brightness, or majesty and beauty of countenance, or pleasant voice; nor was it any supposed, immediate manifestation of God's love to him in particular; nor any imagination of Christ's smiling face, arms open, or words immediately spoken to him, as by name, revealing Christ's love to him; either words of Scripture, or any other; but a manifestation of God's glory, and the beauty of his nature, as supremely excellent in itself; powerfully drawing, and sweetly captivating his heart; bringing him to a hearty desire to exalt God, set him on the throne, and give him supreme honor and glory, as the king and sovereign of the universe; and also a new sense of the infinite wisdom, suitableness and excellency of the way of salvation by Christ; powerfully engaging his whole soul to embrace this way of salvation, and to delight in it. His first faith did not consist in believing that Christ loved him, and died for him, in particular. His first comfort was not from any secret suggestion of God's eternal love to him, or that God was reconciled to him, or intended great mercy for him, by any such texts as these: *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee; Fear not, I am thy God,* &c., or in any such way. On the contrary, when God's glory was first discovered to him, it was without any thought of salvation as his own. His first experience of the sanctifying and comforting power of God's Spirit did not begin in some bodily sensation, any pleasant warm feeling in his breast, that he, as some others, called the feeling of the love of Christ in him, and being full of the Spirit. How exceeding far were his experiences, at his first conversion, from things of such a nature!

And if we look through the whole series of his experiences, from his conversion to his death, we shall find none of this kind

Mr. Brainerd's religion was not selfish and mercenary: his love to God was primarily and principally for the supreme excellency of his own nature, and not built on a preconceived notion that God loved him, had received him into favor, and had done great things for him, or promised great things to him: so his joy was joy in God, and not in himself. We see by his Diary how, from time to time, through the course of his life, his soul was filled with ineffable sweetness and comfort. But what was the spring of this strong and abiding consolation? Not so much the consideration of the sure grounds he had to think that his state was good, that God had delivered him from hell, and that heaven was his; or any thoughts concerning his own distinguished happy and exalted circumstances, as a high favorite of heaven: but the sweet meditations and entertaining views he had of divine things without himself; the affecting considerations and lively ideas of God's infinite glory, his unchangeable blessedness, his sovereignty and universal dominion; together with the sweet exercises of love to God, giving himself up to him, abasing himself before him, denying himself for him, depending upon him, acting for his glory, diligently serving him; and the pleasing prospects or hopes he had of a future advancement of the kingdom of Christ, &c.

It appears plainly and abundantly all along, from his conversion to his death, that that beauty, that sort of good, which was the great object of the new sense of his mind, the new relish and appetite given him in conversion, and thenceforward maintained and increased in his heart, was holiness, conformity to God, living to God, and glorifying him. This was what drew his heart; this was the centre of his soul; this was the ocean to which all the streams of his religious affections tended; this was the object that engaged his eager thirsting desires and earnest pursuits: he knew no true excellency or happiness but this: this was what he longed for most vehemently and constantly on earth; and this was with him the beauty and blessedness of heaven; which made him so much and so often to long for that world of glory; it was to be perfectly holy, and perfectly exercised in the holy employments of heaven; thus to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

His religious illuminations, affections and comfort, seemed to a great degree to be attended with evangelical humiliation; consisting in a sense of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness and odiousness; with an answerable disposition and frame of heart. How deeply affected was he almost continually with his great defects in religion; with his vast distance from that spirituality and holy frame of mind that became him; with his ignorance, pride, deadness, unsteadiness, barrenness! He was not only affected with the remembrance of his former sinfulness, before his conversion, but with the sense of his present vileness and pollution. He was not only disposed to think meanly of himself as before God, and in comparison of him; but amongst men, and as compared with them: he was apt to think other saints better than he; yea, to look on himself as the meanest and least of saints; yea, very often as the vilest and worst of mankind. And notwithstanding his great attainments in spiritual knowledge, yet we find there is scarce any thing that he is more frequently affected and abased with a sense of, than his ignorance.

How eminently did he appear to be a meek and quiet spirit, resembling the lamb-like, dove-like spirit of Jesus Christ! How full of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness and mercy! His love was not merely a fondness and zeal for a party, but a universal benevolence; very often exercised in the most sensible and ardent love to his greatest opposers and enemies. His love and meekness were not a mere pretence, an outward profession and show; but they

were effectual things, manifested in expensive and painful deeds of love and kindness; and in a meek behavior; readily confessing faults under the greatest trials, and humbling himself even at the feet of those from whom he supposed he had suffered most; and from time to time, very frequently praying for his enemies, abhorring the thoughts of bitterness or resentment towards them. I scarcely know where to look for any parallel instance of self-denial, in these respects, in the present age. He was a person of great zeal; but how did he abhor a bitter zeal, and lament it where he saw it! And though he was once drawn into some degrees of it, by the force of prevailing example, as it were in his childhood; yet how did he go about with his heart bruised and broken in pieces for it all his life after!

Of how soft and tender a spirit was he! How far were his experiences, hopes and joys, from a tendency finally to stupify and harden him, to lessen convictions and tenderness of conscience, to cause him to be less affected with present and past sins, and less conscientious with respect to future sins, more easy in the neglect of duties that are troublesome and inconvenient, more slow and partial in complying with difficult commands, less apt to be alarmed at the appearance of his own defects and transgressions, more easily induced to a compliance with carnal appetites! On the contrary, how tender was his conscience! How apt was his heart to smite him! How easily and greatly was he alarmed at the appearance of moral evil! How great and constant was his jealousy over his own heart! How strict his care and watchfulness against sin! How deep and sensible were the wounds that sin made in his conscience! Those evils that are generally accounted small, were almost an insupportable burden to him; such as his inward deficiencies, his having no more love to God, finding within himself any slackness or dulness in religion, any unsteadiness, or wandering frame of mind, &c. How did the consideration of such things as these oppress and abase him, and fill him with inward shame and confusion! His love, and hope, though they were such as cast out a servile fear of hell, yet they were such as were attended with, and abundantly cherished and promoted, a reverential filial fear of God, a dread of sin, and of God's holy displeasure. His joy seemed truly to be a rejoicing with trembling. His assurance and comfort differed greatly from a false enthusiastic confidence and joy, in that it promoted and maintained mourning for sin. Holy mourning, with him, was not only the work of an hour or a day, at his first conversion; but sorrow for sin was like a wound constantly running: he was a mourner for sin all his days. He did not, after he received comfort and full satisfaction of the forgiveness of all his sins, and the safety of his state, forget his past sins, the sins of his youth, that were committed before his conversion; but the remembrance of them, from time to time, revived in his heart, with renewed grief.—That in Ezek. xvi. 63, was evidently fulfilled in him, *That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame; when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done.* And how lastingly did the sins that he committed after his conversion, affect and break his heart! If he did any thing whereby he thought he had in any respect dishonored God, and wounded the interest of religion, he had never done with calling it to mind with sorrow and bitterness: though he was assured that God had forgiven it, yet he never forgave himself: his past sorrows and fears made no satisfaction with him; but still the wound renews and bleeds afresh, again and again. And his present sins, that he daily found in himself, were an occasion of daily, sensible and deep sorrow of heart.

His religious affections and joys were not like those of some, who have

rapture and mighty emotions from time to time in company; but have very little affection in retirement and secret places. Though he was of a very sociable temper, and loved the company of saints, and delighted very much in religious conversation and in social worship; yet his warmest affections, and their greatest effects on animal nature, and his sweetest joys, were in his closet devotions, and solitary transactions between God and his own soul; as is very observable through his whole course, from his conversion to his death. He delighted greatly in sacred retirements; and loved to get quite away from all the world, to converse with God alone, in secret duties.

Mr. Brainerd's experiences and comforts were very far from being like those of some persons, which are attended with a spiritual satiety, and put an end to religious desires and longings, at least to the edge and ardency of them; resting satisfied in their own attainments and comforts, as having obtained their chief end, which is to extinguish their fears of hell, and give them confidence of the favor of God.—How far were his religious affections, refreshments, and satisfactions, from such an operation and influence as this! On the contrary, how were they always attended with longings and thirstings after greater degrees of conformity to God! And the greater and sweeter his comforts were, the more vehement were his desires after holiness. For it is to be observed, that his longings were not so much after joyful discoveries of God's love, and clear views of his title to future advancement and eternal honors in heaven; as after more of present holiness, greater spirituality, a heart more engaged for God, to love and exalt and depend on him, an ability better to serve him, to do more for his glory, and to do all that he did with more of a regard to Christ as his righteousness and strength; and after the enlargement and advancement of Christ's kingdom in the earth. And his desires were not idle wishings and wouldings, but such as were powerful and effectual, to animate him to the earnest, eager pursuit of these things, with utmost diligence, and unfainting labor and self-denial. His comforts never put an end to his seeking after God, and striving to obtain his grace; but on the contrary, greatly engaged and enlarged him therein.

His religion did not consist only in experience, without practice. All his inward illuminations, affections and comforts seemed to have a direct tendency to practice, and to issue in it; and this not merely a practice negatively good, free from gross acts of irreligion and immortality: but a practice positively holy and Christian, in a serious, devout, humble, meek, merciful, charitable, and beneficent conversation; making the service of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the great business of life, which he was devoted to, and pursued with the greatest earnestness and diligence to the end of his days, through all trials. In him was to be seen the right way of being lively in religion. His liveliness in religion did not consist merely or mainly in his being lively with the tongue, but in deed; not in being forward in profession and outward show, and abundant in declaring his own experiences; but chiefly in being active and abundant in the labors and duties of religion; not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and serving his generation according to the will of God.

It cannot be pretended, that the reason why he so much abhorred and condemned the notions and experiences of those whose first faith consists in believing that Christ is theirs, and that Christ died for them; without any previous experience of union of heart to him, for his excellency, as he is in himself, and not for his supposed love to them; and who judge of their interest in Christ, their justification, and God's love to them, not by their sanctification and the exercises and fruits of grace, but by a supposed immediate witness of the Spirit

by inward suggestion; I say it cannot be pretended, that the reason why he so much detested and condemned such opinions and experiences, was, that he was of a too legal spirit; either that he never was dead to the law, never experienced a thorough work of conviction, was never fully brought off from his own righteousness, and weaned from the old covenant, by a thorough legal humiliation; or that afterwards, he had no great degree of evangelical humiliation, not living in a deep sense of his own emptiness, wretchedness, poverty, and absolute dependence on the mere grace of God through Christ. For his convictions of sin, preceding his first consolations in Christ, were exceeding deep and thorough; his trouble and exercise of mind, by a sense of sin and misery, very great and long continued; and the light let into his mind at his conversion and in progressive sanctification, appears to have had its genuine humbling influence upon him, to have kept him low in his own eyes, not confiding in himself, but in Christ, *living by the faith of the Son of God*, and *looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus to eternal life.*

Nor can it be pretended, that the reason why he condemned those, and other things, which this sort of people call the very height of vital religion, and the power of godliness, was, that he was a dead Christian, and lived in the dark (as they express themselves), that his experiences, though they might be true, were not great; that he did not live near to God, had but a small acquaintance with him, and had but a dim sight of spiritual things. If any, after they have read the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd's life, will venture to pretend thus, they will only show that they themselves are in the dark, and do indeed *put darkness for light, and light for darkness.*

II. The foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life may afford matter of conviction, that there is indeed such a thing as true experimental religion, arising from immediate divine influences, supernaturally enlightening and convincing the mind, and powerfully impressing, quickening, sanctifying and governing the heart; which religion is indeed an amiable thing, of happy tendency, and of no hurtful consequence to human society; notwithstanding there having been so many pretences and appearances of what is called experimental vital religion, that have proved to be nothing but vain, pernicious enthusiasm.

If any insist, that Mr. Brainerd's religion was enthusiasm, and nothing but a strange heat, and blind fervor of mind, arising from the strong fancies and dreams of a notional, whimsical brain; I would ask, if it be so, that such things as these are the fruits of enthusiasm, viz., a great degree of honesty and simplicity, sincere and earnest desires and endeavors to know and do whatever is right, and to avoid every thing that is wrong; a high degree of love to God, delight in the perfections of his nature, placing the happiness of life in him; not only in contemplating him, but in being active in pleasing and serving him; a firm and undoubting belief in the Messiah, as the Saviour of the world, the great Prophet of God, and King of God's church; together with great love to him, delight and complacence in the way of salvation by him, and longing for the enlargement of his kingdom; earnest desires that God may be glorified, and the Messiah's kingdom advanced, whatever instruments are made use of uncommon resignation to the will of God, and that under vast trials; great and universal benevolence to mankind, reaching all sorts of persons without distinction, manifested in sweetness of speech and behavior, kind treatment, mercy liberality, and earnest seeking the good of the souls and bodies of men; attended with extraordinary humility, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and love to enemies; and a great abhorrence of a contrary spirit and practice; not only as appearing in others, but whereinsoever it had appeared in himself; causing

the most bitter repentance, and brokenness of heart on account of any past instances of such a conduct: a modest, discreet and decent deportment, among superiors, inferiors and equals; a most diligent improvement of time, and earnest care to lose no part of it; great watchfulness against all sorts of sin, of heart, speech and action: and this example and these endeavors attended with most happy fruits, and blessed effects on others, in humanizing, civilizing, and wonderfully reforming and transforming some of the most brutish savages; idle, immoral, drunkards, murderers, gross idolaters, and wizards; bringing them to permanent sobriety, diligence, devotion, honesty, conscientiousness, and charity: and the foregoing amiable virtues and successful labors all ending at last in a marvellous peace, unmovable stability, calmness and resignation, in the sensible approaches of death; with longing for the heavenly state; not only for the honors and circumstantial advantages of it, but above all, for the moral perfections, and holy and blessed employments of it: and these things in a person indisputably of a good understanding and judgment: I say, if all these things are the fruits of enthusiasm, why should not enthusiasm be thought a desirable and excellent thing? For what can true religion, what can the best philosophy do more? If vapors and whimsey will bring men to the most thorough virtue, to the most benign and fruitful morality; and will maintain it through a course of life, attended with many trials, without affectation or self-exaltation, and with an earnest, constant bearing testimony against the wildness, the extravagances, the bitter zeal, assuming behavior, and separating spirit of enthusiasts; and will do all this more effectually, than any thing else has ever done in any plain known instance that can be produced; if it be so, I say, what cause then has the world to prize and pray for this blessed whimsicalness, and these benign sort of vapors!

III. The preceding history serves to confirm those doctrines usually called the doctrines of grace. For if it be allowed that there is truth, substance or value in the main of Mr. Brainerd's religion, it will undoubtedly follow, that those doctrines are divine: since it is evident, that the whole of it, from beginning to end, is according to that scheme of things; all built on those apprehensions, notions, and views, that are produced and established in the mind by those doctrines. He was brought by doctrines of this kind to his awakening, and deep concern about things of a spiritual and eternal nature; and by these doctrines his convictions were maintained and carried on; and his conversion was evidently altogether agreeable to this scheme, but by no means agreeing with the contrary; and utterly inconsistent with the Arminian notion of conversion or repentance. His conversion was plainly founded in a clear, strong conviction, and undoubting persuasion of the truth of those things appertaining to these doctrines, which Arminians most object against, and which his own mind had contended most about. And his conversion was no confirming and perfecting of moral principles and habits, by use and practice, and his own labor in an industrious disciplining himself, together with the concurring suggestions and conspiring aids of God's Spirit: but entirely a supernatural work, at once turning him from darkness to marvellous light, and from the power of sin to the dominion of divine and holy principles; an effect, in no regard produced by his strength or labor, or obtained by his virtue; and not accomplished until he was first brought to a full conviction that all his own virtue, strength, labors and endeavors, could never avail any thing to the producing or procuring this effect.

A very little while before, his mind was full of the same cavils against the doctrines of God's sovereign grace, which are made by Arminians; and his

heart was full even of a raging opposition to them. And God was pleased to perform this good work in him just after a full end had been put to this cavilling and opposition; after he was entirely convinced, that he was dead in sin, and was in the hands of God, as the absolutely sovereign, unobliged, sole disposer and author of true holiness. God's showing him mercy at such a time, is a confirmation, that this was a preparation for mercy; and consequently, that these things which he was convinced of were true: while he opposed these things, he was the subject of no such mercy; though he so earnestly sought it, and prayed for it with so much painfulness, care and strictness in religion: but when once his opposition is fully subdued, and he is brought to submit to the truths which he before had opposed, with full conviction, then the mercy he sought for is granted, with abundant light, great evidence, and exceeding joy, and he reaps the sweet fruits of it all his life after, and in the *valley of the shadow of death.*

In his conversion he was brought to see the glory of that way of salvation by Christ, that is taught in what are called the doctrines of grace; and thenceforward with unspeakable joy and complacence, to embrace and acquiesce in that way of salvation. He was in his conversion, in all respects, brought to those views, and that state of mind, which these doctrines show to be necessary. And if his conversion was any real conversion, or any thing besides a mere whim, and if the religion of his life was any thing else but a series of freaks of a whimsical mind, then this one grand principle, on which depends the whole difference between Calvinists and Arminians, is undeniable, viz., that the grace or virtue of truly good men, not only differs from the virtue of others in degree, but even in nature and kind. If ever Mr. Brainerd was truly turned from sin to God at all, or ever became truly religious, none can reasonably doubt but that his conversion was at the time when he supposed it to be. The change he then experienced, was evidently the greatest moral change that ever he passed under; and he was then apparently first brought to that kind of religion, that remarkable new habit and temper of mind, which he held all his life after. The narration shows it to be different, in nature and kind, from all that ever he was the subject of before. It was evidently wrought at once, without fitting and preparing his mind, by gradually convincing it more and more of the same truths, and bringing it nearer and nearer to such a temper: for it was soon after his mind had been remarkably full of blasphemy, and a vehement exercise of sensible enmity against God, and great opposition to those truths, which he was now brought with his whole soul to embrace, and rest in, as divine and glorious, and to place his happiness in the contemplation and improvement of. And he himself (who was surely best able to judge) declares, that the dispositions and affections, which were then given him, and thenceforward maintained in him, were most sensibly and certainly, perfectly different in their nature, from all that ever he was the subject of before, or that he ever had any conception of. This he ever stood to and was peremptory in (as what he certainly knew) even to his death. He must be looked upon as capable of judging; he had opportunity to know: he had practised a great deal of religion before, was exceeding strict and conscientious, and had continued so for a long time; had various religious affections, with which he often flattered himself, and sometimes pleased himself as being now in a good estate. And after he had those new experiences, that began in his conversion, they were continued to the end of his life; long enough for him thoroughly to observe their nature, and compare them with what had been before. Doubtless he was *compos mentis;* and was at least one of so good an

understanding and judgment, as to be pretty well capable of discerning and comparing the things that passed in his own mind.

It is further observable, that his religion all along operated in such a manner as tended to confirm his mind in the doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, man's universal and entire dependence on God's power and grace, &c. The more religion prevailed in his heart, and the fuller he was of divine love, and of clear and delightful views of spiritual things, and the more his heart was engaged in God's service; the more sensible he was of the certainty and the excellency and importance of these truths, and the more he was affected with them, and rejoiced in them. And he declares particularly that when he lay for a long while on the verge of the eternal world, often expecting to be in that world in a few minutes, yet at the same time enjoying great serenity of mind, and clearness of thought, and being most apparently in a peculiar manner at a distance from an enthusiastical frame, he at that time saw clearly the truth of those great doctrines of the gospel, which are justly styled the doctrines of grace, and never felt himself so capable of demonstrating the truth of them.

So that it is very evident Mr. Brainerd's religion was wholly correspondent to what is called the Calvinistical scheme, and was the effect of those doctrines applied to his heart: and certainly it cannot be denied that the effect was good, unless we turn Atheists or Deists. I would ask whether there be any such thing in reality, as Christian devotion? If there be, what is it? What is its nature? And what its just measure? Should it not be in a great degree? We read abundantly in Scripture, of loving God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength, of delighting in God, of rejoicing in the Lord, rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory, the soul's magnifying the Lord, thirsting for God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, the soul's breaking for the longing it hath to God's judgments, praying to God with groanings that cannot be uttered, mourning for sin with a broken heart and contrite spirit, &c. How full is the book of Psalms, and other parts of Scripture, of such things as these! Now wherein do these things, as expressed by, and appearing in Mr. Brainerd, either the things themselves, or their effects and fruits, differ from the Scripture representations? These things he was brought to by that strange and wonderful transformation of the man, which he called his conversion. And does not this well agree with what is so often said, in Old Testament and New, concerning the giving of a new heart, creating a right spirit, a being renewed in the spirit of the mind, a being sanctified throughout, becoming a new creature, &c.? Now where is there to be found an Arminian conversion or repentance, consisting in so great and admirable a change? Can the Arminians produce an instance, within this age, and so plainly within our reach and view, of such a reformation, such a transformation of a man, to scriptural devotion, heavenly-mindedness, and true Christian morality, in one that before lived without these things, on the foot of their principles, and through the influence of their doctrines?

And here is worthy to be considered, not only the effect of Calvinistical doctrines, as they are called, on Mr. Brainerd himself, but also the effect of the same doctrines, as taught and inculcated by him, on others. It is abundantly pretended and asserted of late, that these doctrines tend to undermine the very foundations of all religion and morality, and to enervate and vacate all reasonable motives to the exercise and practice of them, and lay invincible stumbling-blocks before infidels, to hinder their embracing Christianity; and that the contrary doctrines are the fruitful principles of virtue and goodness, set religion on its right basis, represent it in an amiable light, give its motives their full force,

and recommend it to the reason and common sense of mankind. But where can they find an instance of so great and signal an effect of their doctrines, in bringing infidels, who were at such a distance from all that is civil, human, sober, rational, and Christian, and so full of inveterate prejudices against these things, to such a degree of humanity, civility, exercise of reason, self-denial, and Christian virtue? Arminians place religion in morality: let them bring an instance of their doctrines producing such a transformation of a people in point of morality. It is strange, if the all-wise God so orders things in his providence, that reasonable and proper means, and his own means, which he himself has appointed, should in no known remarkable instance be instrumental to produce so good an effect; an effect so agreeable to his own word and mind, and that very effect for which he appointed these excellent means; that they should not be so successful as those means which are not his own, but very contrary to them, and of a contrary tendency; means that are in themselves very absurd, and tend to root all religion and virtue out of the world, to promote and establish infidelity, and to lay an insuperable stumbling-block before pagans, to hinder their embracing the gospel: I say, if this be the true state of the case, it is certainly pretty wonderful, and an event worthy of some attention

I know that many will be ready to say, it is too soon yet to glory in the work, that has been wrought among Mr. Brainerd's Indians; it is best to wait and see the final event: it may be, all will come to nothing by and by: to which I answer, not to insist that it will not follow, according to Arminian principles, they are not now true Christians, really pious and godly, though they should fall away and come to nothing, that I never supposed every one of those Indians, who in profession renounced their heathenism and visibly embraced Christianity, and have had some appearances of piety, will finally prove true converts: if two thirds, or indeed one half of them, as great a proportion as there is in the parable of the ten virgins, should persevere, it will be sufficient to show the work wrought among them, to have been truly admirable and glorious. But so much of permanence of their religion has already appeared, as shows it to be something else besides an Indian humor or good mood, or any transient effect in the conceits, notions, and affections of these ignorant people, excited at a particular turn, by artful management. For it is now more than three years ago, that this work began among them, and a remarkable change appeared in many of them; since which time the number of visible converts has greatly increased: and by repeated accounts, from several bands, they still generally persevere in diligent religion and strict virtue. I think worthy to be here inserted, a letter from a young gentleman, a candidate for the ministry, one of those appointed by the honorable Commissioners in Boston, as Missionaries to the Heathen of the Six Nations, so called; who, by their order, dwelt with Mr. John Brainerd, among these Christian Indians, in order to their being prepared for the business of their mission. The letter was written from thence to his parents here in Northampton, and is as follows.

BETHEL, *in New Jersey, Jan.* 14, 1747–8.

HONORED AND DEAR PARENTS:

After a long and uncomfortable journey, by reason of bad weather, I arrived at Mr. Brainerd's the sixth of this instant, where I design to stay this winter; and as yet, upon many accounts, am well satisfied with my coming hither. The state and circumstances of the Indians, spiritual and temporal, much exceed what I expected. I have endeavored to acquaint myself with the state of the Indians, in general, with particular persons, and with the school, as much as the short time I have been here would admit of. And notwithstanding my expec-

tations were very much raised, from Mr. David Brainerd's Journal, and from particular informations from him, yet I must confess, that in many respects, they were not equal to that which now appears to me to be true, concerning the glorious work of divine grace amongst the Indians.

The evening after I came to town, I had opportunity to see the Indians together, whilst the Rev. Mr. Arthur preached to them; at which time there appeared a very general and uncommon seriousness and solemnity in the congregation: and this appeared to me to be the effect of an inward sense of the importance of divine truths, and not because they were hearing a stranger; which was abundantly confirmed to me the next Sabbath, when there was the same devout attendance on divine service, and a surprising solemnity appearing in the performance of each part of divine worship. And some who are hopefully true Christians, appear to have been at that time much enlivened and comforted, not from any observable commotions then, but from conversation afterwards: and others seemed to be under pressing concern for their souls. I have endeavored to acquaint myself with particular persons, many of whom seem to be very humble and growing Christians; although some of them, as I am informed, were before their conversion most monstrously wicked.

Religious conversation seems to be very pleasing and delightful to many, and especially that which relates to the exercises of the heart. And many here do not seem to be real Christians only, but growing Christians also; as well in doctrinal, as experimental knowledge. Besides my conversation with particular persons, I have had opportunity to attend upon one of Mr. Brainerd's catechetical lectures, where I was surprised at their readiness in answering questions which they had not been used to; although Mr. Brainerd complained much of their uncommon deficiency. It is surprising, to see this people, who, not long since were led captive by Satan at his will, and living in the practice of all manner of abominations, without the least sense even of moral honesty, yet now living soberly and regularly, and not seeking every man his own, but every man, in some sense his neighbor's good; and to see those, who but a little while past, knew nothing of the true God, now worshipping him in a solemn and devout manner, not only in public, but in their families, and in secret, which is manifestly the case; it being a difficult thing to walk out in the woods in the morning, without disturbing persons at their secret devotion. And it seems wonderful, that this should be the case, not only with adult persons, but with children also. It is observable here, that many children, if not the children in general, retire into secret places to pray. And as far as at present I can judge, this is not the effect of custom and fashion, but of real seriousness and thoughtfulness about their souls.

I have frequently gone into the school, and have spent considerable time there amongst the children; and have been surprised to see, not only their diligent attendance upon the business of the school, but also the proficiency they have made in it, in reading and writing, and in their catechisms of divers sorts It seems to be as pleasing and as natural to the children to have their books in their hands, as it does for many others to be at play. I have gone into a house where there has been a number of children accidentally gathered together, and observed, that every one had his book in his hand, and was diligently studying of it. There is to the number of about thirty of these children, who can answer to all the questions in the assembly's catechism; and the bigger part of them are able to do it, with the proofs, to the fourth commandment. I wish there were many such schools: I confess that I never was acquainted with such an one, in many respects. O that what God has done here may prove to be the

beginning of a far more glorious and extensive work of grace among the Hea then. I am your obedient and dutiful son, JOB STRONG.

P. S. Since the date of this, I have had opportunity to attend upon another of Mr. Brainerd's catechetical lectures; and truly I was convinced, that Mr Brainerd did not complain before of his people's defects in answering to questions proposed, without reason: for although their answers at that time exceeded my expectations very much; yet their performances at this lecture very much exceeded them.

IV. Is there not much in the preceding memoirs of Mr. Brainerd to teach and excite us to duty, who are called to the work of the ministry, and all that are candidates for this great work? What a deep sense did he seem to have of the greatness and importance of that work, and with what weight did it lie on his mind! How sensible was he of his own insufficiency for this work; and how great was his dependence on God's sufficiency! How solicitous, that he might be fitted for it! And to this end, how much time did he spend in prayer and fasting, as well as reading and meditation; giving himself to these things! How did he dedicate his whole life, all his powers and talents to God; and forsake and renounce the world, with all its pleasing and ensnaring enjoyments, that he might be wholly at liberty, to serve Christ in this work; and to please him who had chosen him to be a soldier, under the *Captain of our salvation!* With what solicitude, solemnity, and diligence, did he devote himself to God our Saviour, and seek his presence and blessing in secret, at the time of his ordination! And how did his whole heart appear to be constantly engaged, his whole time employed, and his whole strength spent in the business he then solemnly undertook, and was publicly set apart to! And his history shows us the right way to success in the work of the ministry. He sought it as a resolute soldier seeks victory, in a siege or battle; or as a man that runs a race, for a great prize. Animated with love to Christ and souls, how did he labor always fervently, not only in word and doctrine, in public and private, but in prayers day and night, wrestling with God in secret, and travailing in birth, with unutterable groans and agonies, until Christ was formed in the hearts of the people to whom he was sent! How did he thirst for a blessing on his ministry; and *watch for souls, as one that must give account!* How did he *go forth in the strength of the Lord God;* seeking and depending on a special influence of the Spirit to assist and succeed him! And what was the happy fruit at last, though after long waiting, and many dark and discouraging appearances! Like a true son of Jacob, he persevered in wrestling, through all the darkness of the night, until the breaking of the day.

And his example of laboring, praying, denying himself, and enduring hardness, with unfainting resolution and patience, and his faithful, vigilant, and prudent conduct in many other respects, which it would be too long now particularly to recite, may afford instruction to missionaries in particular.

V. The foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life may afford instruction to Christians in general; as it shows, in many respects, the right way of practising religion, in order to obtain the ends of it, and receive the benefits of it; or how Christians should *run the race set before them*, if they would not run in vain, or run as uncertainly, but would honor God in the world, adorn their profession, be serviceable to mankind, have the comforts of religion while they live, be free from disquieting doubts and dark apprehensions about the state of their souls; enjoy peace in the approaches of death, and *finish their course with joy.* In general, he much recommended, fo this purpose, the redemption

of time, great diligence in the business of the Christian life, watchfulness, &c. And he very remarkably exemplified these things.

But particularly, his example and success with regard to one duty in special, may be of great use to both ministers and private Christians; I mean the duty of secret fasting. The reader has seen, how much Mr. Brainerd recommends this duty, and how frequently he exercised himself in it; nor can it well have escaped observation, how much he was owned and blessed in it, and of what great benefit it evidently was to his soul. Among all the many days he spent in secret fasting and prayer, that he gives an account of in his Diary, there is scarce an instance of one, but what was either attended or soon followed with apparent success, and a remarkable blessing, in special incomes and consolations of God's Spirit; and very often, before the day was ended. But it must be observed, that when he set about this duty, he did it in good earnest, stirring up himself to take hold of God, and continuing *instant in prayer*, with much of the spirit of Jacob, who said to the angel, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.*

VI. There is much in the preceding account to excite and encourage God's people to earnest prayers and endeavors for the advancement and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ in the world. Mr. Brainerd gave us an excellent example in this respect. He sought the prosperity of Zion with all his might. He preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy. How did his soul long for it, and pant after it! And how earnestly and often did he wrestle with God for it! And how far did he, in these desires and prayers, seem to be carried beyond all private and selfish views! Being animated by a pure love to Christ, an earnest desire of his glory, and a disinterested affection to the souls of mankind.

As there is much in Mr. Brainerd's life to encourage Christians to seek the advancement of Christ's kingdom, in general; so there is, in particular, to pray for the conversion of the Indians on this continent, and to exert themselves in the use of proper means for its accomplishment. For it appears, that he, in his unutterable longings and wrestlings of soul for the flourishing of religion, had his mind peculiarly intent on the conversion and salvation of these people, and his heart more especially engaged in prayer for them. And if we consider the degree and manner in which he, from time to time, sought and hoped for an extensive work of grace among them, I think we have reason to hope, that the wonderful things, which God wrought among them by him, are but a forerunner of something yet much more glorious and extensive of that kind; and this may justly be an encouragement, to well disposed, charitable persons, to *honor the Lord with their substance*, by contributing, as they are able, to promote the spreading of the gospel among them; and this also may incite and encourage gentlemen who are incorporated, and intrusted with the care and disposal of those liberal benefactions, which have already been made by pious persons, to that end; and likewise the missionaries themselves, that are or may be employed; and it may be of direction unto both, as to the proper qualifications of missionaries, and the proper measures to be taken in order to their success.

One thing in particular, I would take occasion from the foregoing history to mention and propose to the consideration of such as have the care of providing and sending missionaries among savages; viz., whether it would not ordinarily be best to send two together? It is pretty manifest, that Mr. Brainerd's going, as he did, alone into the howling wilderness, was one great occasion of such a prevailing of melancholy on his mind; which was his greatest disadvantage. He was much in speaking of it himself, when he was here in his dying state; and expressed himself, to this purpose, that none could conceive of the

disadvantage a missionary in such circumstances was under, by being alone; especially as it exposed him to discouragement and melancholy: and spoke of the wisdom of Christ in sending forth his disciples by two and two; and left it as his dying advice to his brother, never to go to Susquehannah, to travel about in that remote wilderness, to preach to the Indians there, as he had often done, without the company of a fellow missionary.

VII. One thing more may not be unprofitably observed in the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd; and that is the special and remarkable disposal of Divine Providence, with regard to the circumstances of his last sickness and death.

Though he had been long infirm, his constitution being much broken by his fatigues and hardships; and though he was often brought very low by illness, before he left Kaunaumeek, and also while he lived at the Forks of Delaware; yet his life was preserved until he had seen that which he had so long and greatly desired and sought, a glorious work of grace among the Indians, and had received the wished for blessing of God on his labors. Though as it were in deaths oft, yet he lived to behold the happy fruits of the long continued travail of his soul, and labor of his body, in the wonderful conversion of many of the Heathen, and the happy effect of it in the great change of their conversation, with many circumstances which afforded a fair prospect of the continuance of God's blessing upon them: thus he did not depart, *until his eyes had seen God's salvation.*

Though in that winter that he lay sick at Mr. Dickinson's in Elizabethtown, he continued for a long time in an extremely low state, so that his life was almost despaired of, and his state was sometimes such that it was hardly expected he would live a day to an end; yet his life was spared a while longer; he lived to see his brother arrived in New Jersey, being come to succeed him in the care of his Indians; and he himself had opportunity to assist in his examination and introduction into his business; and to commit the conduct of his dear people to one whom he well knew, and could put confidence in, and use freedom with, in giving him particular instructions and charges, and under whose care he could leave his congregation with great cheerfulness.

The providence of God was remarkable in so ordering it, that before his death he should take a journey into New England, and go to Boston: which was, in many respects, of very great and happy consequence to the interest of religion, and especially among his own people. By this means, as has been observed, he was brought into acquaintance with many persons of note and influence, ministers and others, belonging both to the town and various parts of the country; and had opportunity, under the best advantages, to bear a testimony for God and true religion, and against those false appearances of it that have proved most pernicious to the interests of Christ's kingdom in the land. And the providence of God is particularly observable in this circumstance of the testimony he there bore for true religion, viz., that he there was brought so near the grave, and continued for so long a time on the very brink of eternity; and from time to time looked on himself, and was looked on by others, as just leaving the world; and that in these circumstances he should be so particularly directed and assisted in his thoughts and views of religion, to distinguish between the true and the false, with such clearness and evidence; and that after this he should be unexpectedly and surprisingly restored and strengthened, so far as to be able to converse freely; and have such opportunity, and special occasions to declare the sentiments he had in these, which were, to human apprehension, his dying circumstances; and to bear his testimony concerning the nature of true religion, and concerning the mischievous tendency of its most

prevalent counterfeits and false appearances; as things he had a special, clear, distinct view of at that time, when he expected in a few minutes to be in eternity; and the certainty and importance of which were then, in a peculiar manner, impressed on his mind.

Among the happy consequences of his going to Boston, were those liberal benefactions that have been mentioned, which were made by pious-disposed persons, for the maintaining and promoting the interest of religion among his people: and also the meeting of a number of gentlemen in Boston, of note and ability, to consult upon measures for that purpose; who were excited, by their acquaintance and conversation with Mr. Brainerd, and by the account of the great things God had wrought by his ministry, to unite themselves, that by their joint endeavors and contributions they might promote the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual good of their fellow creatures, among the Indians in New Jersey, and elsewhere.

The providence of God was observable in his going to Boston at a time when not only the honorable commissioners were seeking missionaries to the Six Nations; but just after his journal, which gives an account of his labors and success among the Indians, had been received and spread in Boston: whereby his name was known, and the minds of serious people were well prepared to receive his person, and the testimony he there gave for God; to exert themselves for the upholding and promoting the interest of religion in his congregation, and amongst the Indians elsewhere; and to regard his judgment concerning the qualifications of missionaries, &c. If he had gone there the fall before, when he had intended to have made his journey into New England, but was prevented by a sudden great increase of his illness, it would not have been likely to have been in any measure to so good effect: and also if he had not been unexpectedly detained in Boston: for when he went from my house, he intended to make but a very short stay there: but Divine Providence, by his being brought so low there, detained him long; thereby to make way for the fulfilling its own gracious designs.

The providence of God was remarkable in so ordering, that although he was brought so very near the grave in Boston, that it was not in the least expected he would ever come alive out of his chamber; yet he wonderfully revived, and was preserved several months longer: so that he had opportunity to see, and fully to converse with both his younger brethren before he died; which was a thing he greatly desired; and especially to see his brother John, with whom was left the care of his congregation; that he might by him be fully informed of their state, and might leave with him such instructions and directions as were requisite in order to their spiritual welfare, and to send to them his dying charges and counsels. And he had also an opportunity, by means of this suspension of his death, to find and recommend a couple of persons fit to be employed as missionaries to the Six Nations, as had been desired of him.

Although it was the pleasure of a sovereign God, that he should be taken away from his congregation, the people that he had begotten through the gospel, who were so dear to him; yet it was granted to him, that before he died he should see them well provided for every way: he saw them provided for with one to instruct them, and take care of their souls; his own brother, whom he could confide in: he saw a good foundation laid for the support of the school among them; those things that before were wanting in order to it, being supplied: and he had the prospect of a charitable society being established, of able and well disposed persons, who seemed to make the spiritual interest of his congregation their own; whereby he had a comfortable view of their being

well provided for, for the future: and he had also opportunity to leave all his dying charges with his successor in the pastoral care of his people, and by him to send his dying counsels to them. Thus God granted him to see all things happily settled, or in a hopeful way of being so, before his death, with respect to his dear people. And whereas not only his own congregation, but the souls of the Indians in North America in general, were very dear to him, and he had greatly set his heart on the propagating and extending the kingdom of Christ among them; God was pleased to grant to him, however it was his will that he should be taken away, and so should not be the immediate instrument of their instruction and conversion, yet that before his death, he sould see unexpected extraordinary provision made for this also. And it is remarkable, that God not only allowed him to see such provision made for the maintaining the interest of religion among his own people, and the propagation of it elsewhere; but honored him by making him the means or occasion of it. So that it is very probable, however Mr. Brainerd, during the last four months of his life, was ordinarily in an extremely weak and low state, very often scarcely able to speak; yet that he was made the instrument or means of much more good in that space of time, than he would have been if he had been well, and in full strength of body. Thus God's power was manifested in his weakness, and the life of Christ was manifested in his mortal flesh.

Another thing wherein appears the merciful disposal of Providence with respect to his death, was, that he did not die in the wilderness, among the savages at Kaunaumeek, or the Forks of Delaware, or at Susquehannah; but in a place where his dying behavior and speeches might be observed and remembered, and some account given of them for the benefit of survivors; and also where care might be taken of him in his sickness, and proper honors done him at his death.

The providence of God is also worthy of remark, in so overruling and ordering the matter, that he did not finally leave absolute orders for the entire suppressing of his private papers; as he had intended and fully resolved, insomuch that all the importunity of his friends could scarce restrain him from doing it, when sick at Boston. And one thing relating to this is peculiarly remarkable, viz., that his brother, a little before his death, should come from the Jerseys unexpected, and bring his Diary to him, though he had received no such order. Mr. Brainerd himself, as was before observed, was much in taking notice, when near his end, of the merciful circumstances of his death; and said, from time to time, that God had granted him all his desire.

And I would not conclude my observations on the merciful circumstances of Mr. Brainerd's death, without acknowledging with thankfulness, the gracious dispensation of Providence to me and my family, in so ordering, that he (though the ordinary place of his abode was more than two hundred miles distant) should be cast hither, to my house, in his last sickness, and should die here: so that we had opportunity for much acquaintance and conversation with him, and to show him kindness in such circumstances, and to see his dying behavior, to hear his dying speeches, to receive his dying counsels, and to have the benefit of his dying prayers. May God in infinite mercy grant that we may ever retain a proper remembrance of these things, and make a due improvement of the advantages we have had in these respects! The Lord grant also, that the foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life and death may be for the great spiritual benefit of all that shall read it, and prove a happy means of promoting the revival of true religion in these parts of the world.

END OF VOL. I.